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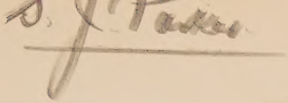

THE RULE OF FAITH

AND THE

DOCTRINE OF INSPIRATION.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

THE NEWER CRITICISM.
THE NEW APOLOGETIC.
CALVIN AND CALVINISM.
ETERNITY OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT.
WHAT IS PRESBYTERIANISM?
SPENCER'S BIOLOGICAL HYPOTHESIS.
ATOMISM.
AUTOMATISM.
UTILITARIANISM.
AGNOSTICISM.
NATURALISM.

THE RULE OF FAITH

AND THE

DOCTRINE OF INSPIRATION.

THE CAREY LECTURES FOR 1884..

BY

ROBERT WATTS, D.D.,

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London:

HODDER AND STOUGHTON,

27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLXXXV.

נָבִיא אָקִים לָהֶם מִקֶּרֶב אֲחֵיהֶם כָּמֹוךָ וְנָתַתִּי דְבָרַי בְּפִיו וְדִבֶּר אֲלֵיהֶם
אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֲצַוֶּנּוּ׃ DEUTERONOMY xviii. 18.

Ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐξ ἐμαυτοῦ οὐκ ἐλάλησα· ἀλλ' ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ, αὐτός μοι ἐντολὴν δέδωκε, τί εἴπω καὶ τί λαλήσω.—JOHN xii. 49.

Ἃ καὶ λαλοῦμεν, οὐκ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις, ἀλλ' ἐν διδακτοῖς Πνεύματος, πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες. —I CORINTHIANS ii. 13.

Printed by Hazell, Watson, & Viney, Limited, London and Aylesbury.

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN
GRADUATE UNIVERSITY

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PREFACE.

THE course of Lectures given to the public in this volume was delivered in Belfast during the winter of 1884-5, under the provisions of the Carey Lectureship. The object aimed at was the reassertion and vindication of the immemorial doctrine of the Church in regard to the Rule of Faith and its relation to its Divine Author. The ground taken in these Lectures is, that "the word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him," and that these writings have been given by inspiration of God, through the agency of men who spake or wrote as they were moved, or borne along, by the Holy Ghost, so that the record is truly, and in the strictest sense of the term, the word of God.

Such is the doctrine regarding this vital subject, more or less clearly expressed by the Church

throughout her history, and reaffirmed by the Westminster Divines in an Assembly which might well claim to represent the Theology of the Reformation and the Protestantism of Great Britain and Ireland in the Seventeenth Century. From this doctrine there have, since then, been several grave departures both in Europe and America. Some of these have originated in a desire to conciliate opponents, whose aversion to the doctrine of a Supernatural Revelation, it has been assumed, has been either created, or intensified, by the strict theory of Inspiration, which teaches that the agency of the inspiring Spirit extended to the *form* as well as the *matter*, to the *language* as well as the *ideas*, of the Revelation.

These attempts at reconciliation, however, have not only proved abortive as regards the class for whose sake they have been made, but, beyond question, have resulted in injury to the cause they were designed to serve. It is matter of history that they have given rise to false views of the nature and effects of the Divine agency, throughout the entire domains of Nature and of Grace. It has been found that this species of Apologetics involves modifications which are really compromises of the truth, and that instead of winning men from their alienation,

such apologies confirm them in the belief that the claims of the Bible are utterly indefensible.

Recent writers of this class of apologists have, generally, laid claim to superior learning and high attainments in Philosophy, and have spoken of the time-honoured doctrine of Verbal Inspiration as an antiquated dogma that has deservedly lost its hold upon the learning and intelligence of the age. So persistently have these claims to superior culture and acquirements been put forward, that many have taken the claimants at their own estimate, and have concluded that all the learning and Philosophy are on the side of the anti-verbalists, and that none, save the unlearned and unphilosophical, could entertain the doctrine of a Plenary, Verbal Inspiration. Such boasting is as baseless as it is vain. Great attainments in Language and extensive acquaintance with Literature are valuable acquisitions, but as such accomplishments depend more upon memory than upon judgment, they furnish no guarantee of the soundness of the Critical conclusions reached by their possessors. A man may have mastered many languages, and may be acquainted with the entire critical apparatus known to the scholarship of the day, and may, at the same time, prove a most untrustworthy guide in any department of know-

ledge, whether sacred or secular. The work of the linguist in its relation to Criticism is like the work of the phenomenologist in its relation to Science, or the work of the quarryman to that of the architect. Its entire achievement may be the production of a *rudis indegestaque moles*, a mass without form and void, and destined so to abide until a mind gifted with the requisite taste and judicial balance, shall reduce the Chaos to a rational Cosmos. For these latter qualifications, no linguistic attainments can ever be accepted as a substitute. In view of the constant assertion of exclusive Critical rights based upon such attainments, it may not be out of place to assure the simplest reader of the Bible that it is not within the power of any Critic, however learned, to point out a single doctrine within the scope of the Analogy of the faith which is dependent upon the mysteries of his science, or one which was not known before his so-called science had existence. Equally independent of this science is the great question discussed in the latter portion of this volume —the question of Inspiration. While accurate acquaintance with the original tongues in which the Scriptures were at first written is a most important aid in the investigation, it is nevertheless true, that without any knowledge whatever of the originals, a

believer, with the English Version in his hand, may ascertain, infallibly, what the Scriptures teach on this subject. It may be held as an unquestionable truth that it is just as easy to find out, from any extant translation of the Scriptures, what the true doctrine of Inspiration is, as it is to find out any other doctrine within the compass of Revelation. There is no mystery about the process of inquiry. The simple question is: "What do the Scriptures teach?" and the answer must be elicited by a fair interpretation of those passages in which the sacred writers inform us of the extent to which the Agency of the inspiring Spirit reached. While the sacred writers give us no information regarding the *nature* of the Divine agency, in its operation upon their minds, and while we cannot propound any doctrine regarding the *mode* in which the Spirit actuated the agents He employed to communicate the Divine will to men, it is idle to allege, as many do, that the Scriptures do not furnish the material necessary to formulate a doctrine of Inspiration. It is true they teach no doctrine of the *mode* of the Spirit's agency, but they do teach, both expressly and by implication, a doctrine of results; and that doctrine is, that the Spirit so actuated the human agents as to determine the language in which they gave

expression to the truths and facts recalled, or communicated in the first instance, to their minds. Such is the doctrine, and it is as clearly revealed in the sacred oracles as is the doctrine of Justification, or Regeneration, or the Atonement. The *mode* is a mystery, as the mode of the Divine agency, in every case, must ever be a mystery to finite minds; but the *outcome* of the actuating energy of the Holy Spirit is one of the most clearly revealed truths within the compass of the Divine Record.

To aid in the maintenance and defence of this doctrine, and to establish, on the authority of the written word, the true sources of an infallible Rule of Faith, are the objects aimed at in this volume. In prosecuting this task the method adopted is what may be designated the Princetonian, viz.—1. To prove that the doctrine advocated is the doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures. 2. To show that the doctrine is in conformity with Christian experience. 3. That it is sustained by the testimony of genuine Science and sound Philosophy. 4. That the opposite is true of all opposing theories —that they are unscriptural, contrary to Christian experience, unscientific and unphilosophical. Such was the method pursued by my venerated teacher, Dr. Charles Hodge, of Princeton, New Jersey, to

whom I am largely indebted for whatever progress I have made in the study of the system of Divine truth given back to the Church by the theologians of the Reformation.

With the hope that the present discussion may help to clear these vital subjects of misconceptions and irrelevant issues, and contribute to the awakening of a deeper reverence for the Holy Bible, these Lectures are now given to a larger Christian public and committed to the providence and grace of Him whose name is the Word of God.

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LECTURE I.

THE subject which is to engage our attention in this course of lectures is THE RULE OF FAITH AND THE DOCTRINE OF INSPIRATION, and it is not too much to claim that there is no topic within the wide range of theological discussion which demands, at present, more earnest thought on the part of those who are set for the defence of the sacred oracles. There are few of the errors broached in the past history of the Church, whether within or without her pale, which have not their advocates in the present day, and it is true of them all that they have reference, ultimately, to "what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man." In entering upon the investigation of this all-important subject, the first question for consideration is—

WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF INFORMATION IN REGARD TO THE RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE?

On this point the Scriptures are most explicit. While they claim for themselves that knowledge

which makes wise unto salvation, they teach that the heavens declare the glory of God, and that the earth showeth forth His hands' work, and that the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are so clearly seen by the things that are made that the heathen are left without excuse (Psalm xix. 1-7 and Rom. i. 20).

Nor is this revelation of God restricted to the field of the astronomical array. The whole realms of the organic and inorganic worlds, of matter and of mind, bear witness to the existence and exercise of a wisdom and power which transcend all human estimate. Pre-eminent over all natural sources of the knowledge of God must be recognised the moral constitution of man. Created in knowledge and righteousness, the soul of man, even now in its fallen estate, bears testimony to the moral character of its Creator. External nature impresses the mind with a sense of the majesty of God, but the moral law, whose work is written in the heart, convinces of sin, and makes men feel that He who is the Author of their being is also their Lawgiver and Judge.

The Test of our Deductions from the Light of Nature.

In our study of the book of Nature in all its departments, it must be borne in mind that there is no disclosure of the Divine attributes made therein

which is not also made in the book of Revelation. This clearly revealed fact warrants the conclusion that all our interpretations of the book of Nature are to be tested by the teachings of the Sacred Scriptures. A doctrine deduced from the former, which is not in harmony with the teaching of the latter fairly interpreted, must be regarded as false.

In taking this ground, there is nothing claimed for the Holy Scriptures which they do not claim for themselves. They claim to be an infallible Revelation of the Divine will on every subject of which they treat, and claiming this, they necessarily exclude all rival standards or tests of truth within their own province. As the Author of the Bible is also the Creator of the universe, it is certainly not unreasonable that where He has given a deliverance all counter-utterances should be rejected.

RATIONALISM.

Rationalism, claiming as it does for human reason pre-eminence over all other sources of knowledge, sets itself in antagonism to all this, and either rejects the claims of the Bible as a supernatural Revelation altogether, or claims the prerogative of sitting in judgment on its contents. Speaking of Calvinism. Mr. Matthew Arnold says, "When Calvinism tells us this, is it not talking about God just as if He were a man in the next street, whose proceedings Calvinism intimately knew and could give account

of, could verify that account at any moment, and enable us to verify it also? It is true when the scientific sense in us, *the sense which seeks exact knowledge*, calls for that verification, Calvinism refers us to St. Paul, from whom it professes to have got this history of what it calls 'the covenant of redemption.' But this is only pushing the difficulty a stage further back, for if it is St. Paul and not Calvinism that professes this exact acquaintance with God and His dealings, the scientific sense calls upon St. Paul to produce the facts by which he verifies what he says, and if he cannot produce them, then it treats both St. Paul's assertion and Calvinism's assertion after him as of no real consequence" (Dr. M. Arnold's "St. Paul and Protestantism," pp. 10, 11). It were, of course, easy to show that the Apostle, here criticised so irreverently by this Oxford professor of poetry, has abundantly established the doctrine, so unceremoniously denounced, by the most unquestionable facts in the history of the Jewish and Gentile world; and equally easy to show from undeniable facts, that God still deals with men on the same principles. But the object of this reference is simply to point out to what lengths of irreverence the spirit of Rationalism may lead. It is true there are Rationalists and Rationalists. All to whom the designation is applied do not go the length indicated by Mr. Arnold. Some of them admit that a Revelation has been made, and

that it is on record in the Scriptures ; but claiming, as they do, that it is the prerogative of Reason to sit in judgment upon this Record and determine what is, and what is not, to be received, there does not seem to be any very definite reason for a distinct classification. Those who hold that Reason is the measure by which the existing Revelation is to be tested very soon pass into the category of those who regard Reason as both the source and the measure of all truth. The distinction, at most, must be regarded as temporary and provisional, and be looked upon as marking a stage in the transition towards absolute scepticism.

The goal of Rationalism may be seen in the following sketch by Theodore Parker : — " This theory teaches that there is a natural supply for spiritual as well as for corporeal wants ; that there is a connection between God and the soul, as between light and the eye, sound and the ear, food and the palate, truth and the intellect, beauty and the imagination. And as we have bodily senses to lay hold on matter and supply bodily wants, through which we attain, naturally, all needed material things, so we have spiritual faculties to lay hold on God and supply spiritual wants ; through them we obtain all needed spiritual things." With such an apparatus for the supply of his spiritual wants, of course man has no need of any supernatural Revelation.

REMARKS ON THIS FORM OF RATIONALISM.

1. The theory proceeds upon the assumption that what is true in the sphere of the physical must be true also in the sphere of the moral and spiritual. Arguments of this class need only to be stated in order to be rejected. It is one thing to lay hold on matter and supply our bodily wants, and another to lay hold on God and supply our spiritual wants. It is one thing to hunger and thirst for those supplies by which our bodies are nourished and sustained, and another to hunger and thirst after righteousness. All men are conscious of the one experience as entering into the history of their everyday life, while the contrary experience in regard to spiritual things is a leading characteristic of the human race. 2. This leads to the remark that the theory is in direct contradiction to facts. Of what value is such a theory when estimated in the light of the history of mankind and of one's own personal experience? The Rationalist may tell us that our religious consciousness is as sure a guide in spiritual matters as is the instinct of the animal creation within their own sphere; but the awful fact still remains unchallengeable, that in no instance in the history of man has this capacity of spiritual apprehension been manifested, while, on the contrary, apart from Revelation, men have become vain in their imaginations, darkened in their hearts, and have lost the knowledge

of God possessed by the family of Noah after the Flood.

Strictures on the Second Form of Rationalism.

The second form of Rationalism, while admitting the fact of a supernatural Revelation, reduces its contents to the truths of Reason. It acknowledges nothing transcending the range of man's rational powers. In a word, it makes Reason the ultimate ground of faith in the objective Revelation. To the theory in this form it may be objected :—

1. That it is irreconcilable with the Scriptural idea of faith. A man cannot be said to exercise faith in the truths of a Revelation which he has received, not on the authority or testimony of some witness, but on the ground of the reasonableness of its contents. Such was not the character of the faith of Abraham. He believed what God told him respecting the promised seed, not because of the reasonableness of the thing promised ; but despite all the reasons against it, he believed God. 2. As Dr. Hodge has shown in his " Systematic Theology," this theory assumes that human Reason is the highest order of intelligence in the universe. If we are to accept nothing except we can understand it, of course the assumption is that there is no higher intelligence to which human Reason is bound to defer. Only let it be admitted that there is a God,

and that He is wiser than men, that His understanding is above the understandings of the intelligences He has created, and that His knowledge transcends ours, and it must be manifest that a Revelation from such a Being may contain truths on whose claims human Reason is incompetent to sit in judgment. 3. On this theory salvation would be limited to the wise and learned. As it is eternal life to know God and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent, and as, according to this theory, human Reason must determine what is, and what is not, the true knowledge of God, none but men of mighty intellects and high culture could decide in regard to the sum of saving knowledge. The weaker a man's intellectual capacity, the more limited would be his creed. It is scarcely necessary to observe that a theory which involves the exclusion of the weak and the foolish things of this world from the kingdom of Heaven, and exalts the noble and the wise to heirship, is in direct antagonism to the teachings of the word of God. 4. Not only would the dimensions of a man's creed and his obligation to believe vary with his natural intellectual capacity, but the same man with the same Revelation in his hand would be warranted in rejecting some of its truths at one stage of his intellectual progress, and be under obligation to accept these same truths at a more advanced stage. 5. Lastly, this theory is exposed to this additional objection that it lays down a condition of

belief in regard to the truths of revelation which is recognised in no other department of knowledge. Men do not demand as the condition of their faith in the revelations of science that science shall propose nothing above their comprehension. The faith of men (speaking generally), in the marvellous discoveries of science, does not rest upon their ability to verify scientific reports, but upon the testimony of those whom they deem worthy of confidence. Speaking of infinitesimal organisms revealed by the microscope, Professor Huxley remarked to his class that we must believe that there are beyond these still minuter forms, which no magnifying power hitherto reached has been able to disclose. With Huxley himself, in this instance, faith rests upon probability; in the case of others, not scientists, who accept his conjecture, it rests upon their confidence in his scientific sagacity.

Province of Reason in Matters of Faith.

Although Reason is neither the source nor the standard of religious truth, it has, nevertheless, much to do with the truths of Revelation. Irrational beings could have nothing to do with the truths revealed in the Bible. Throughout, the sacred writings assume on the part of men the possession of reason and conscience.

1. In the first place, man's reason is called into exercise in the intellectual apprehension of the

object of faith. Without this exercise of our rational powers there can be no faith, for faith embraces as one of its essential elements assent to the truth of some proposition. By the intellectual apprehension of the truth propounded, however, is not meant the comprehension of the truth in its inherent logical consistency, and its harmony with other related truths. This is not simply knowledge, but understanding. The knowledge implied in believing is simply the apprehension of the meaning of the proposition believed. No one can be said to believe a statement of whose import he is ignorant. A man can be said to believe what he does not understand, but he cannot be said to believe what he does not know. We speak of knowing *that* a thing is, and we speak of understanding *how* it is. I know that by a volition I can raise my arm, but how it is that the motion follows the volition I understand not. The former is empirical knowledge; the latter is philosophical knowledge. The latter is not necessary to faith; the former is indispensable.

2. To Reason belongs also what theologians designate a *judicium contradictionis*. Here it is necessary to define clearly what is embraced under this acknowledged prerogative, as a Rationalist, taking advantage of the concession to Reason of such a prerogative, may think he is entitled to claim that the friends of Revelation have taken the Rationalistic ground, and have constituted Reason the standard

by which all communications are to be judged. To prevent such assumption it is simply necessary to state with exactness what is, and what is not, embraced under this prerogative. The sphere of judgment conceded under this designation is simply the credibility of the contents of the Revelation; and by credibility is not meant the comprehensibility of the doctrine, but its freedom from everything which would tend to discredit it. The question before the mind when it exercises this prerogative is simply this: May the proposition be true? The question is not: Must it be true, or, Is it comprehensible, but, Is it, or is it not, immoral, absurd, or impossible? If the communication claiming to be a Revelation from God teach what is immoral, absurd, or impossible, the Reason of man, in the exercise of an inalienable right, rises up, and rejects it. If, however, it be unembarrassed by these attributes, right Reason recognises it as credible. In giving this verdict Reason does not affirm that the doctrine is true. It simply affirms that as it is not immoral, absurd, or impossible, it may be true, and, therefore, may be believed without violence to our rational nature. Having, in the exercise of this prerogative, discovered nothing fitted to discredit the professed Revelation, the mind is ready to entertain the question of its Divine authorship and to examine its credentials.

The statement now made of what is embraced under this prerogative, is sufficient argument in sup-

port of its claims. In considering the question whether a given communication may have come from God, the human mind cannot avoid the consideration of the points specified. Constituted as we are—and our constitution is not designed to be a source of delusion—we can never regard as credible that which is absurd, immoral, or impossible. It is true that men often err in the exercise of this prerogative, and accept, as Divine revelations, systems which contain contradictory, absurd, and immoral doctrines; but this humiliating fact does not disprove the existence of this prerogative: it simply proves the liability of man to err in the exercise of his powers. All men claim the right to sit in judgment upon a professed Revelation, and no man professes to receive, as a Revelation, a communication characterised by absurdity or immorality, or which calls upon him to accept what he regards as impossible.

3. The Scriptures recognise the right of Reason to judge of the evidences wherewith their Divine authority has been attested. The Divine messengers through whom the Revelation given in the Bible has been communicated have been empowered to work miracles, or gifted with knowledge which must have come from God, in order to establish their claims as the bearers of a Divine commission. In furnishing His servants with these credentials God has manifestly recognised it as one of the functions of Reason to judge of them, and to decide upon their validity.

Our Saviour took this ground when He told the Jews that "if He had not done among them miracles which no other man ever did, they had not had sin," and also when He upbraided the cities of Galilee because that all the mighty works He had done among them had not convinced them of His Messiahship. He had submitted to them abundant evidence of His claims, and they had not examined it as reasonable men. In other words, He recognises the prerogative of Reason even where His own commission is at stake, and condemns the men who rejected Him for neglecting to exercise it, or for the misuse of it in their treatment of His claims.

The Westminster Confession of Faith is very explicit on this point. It speaks of "the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the consent of the parts, the scope of the whole, and the full discovery it makes of the only way of salvation," as among the evidences which move our minds to accept the Scriptures as the word of God. Of course it is implied in all this that the claims of the Revelation have been subjected to examination in regard to all these points, and that, as the result of such examination, the mind has been persuaded, *i.e.* rationally convinced, that it bears sufficient evidence of having come forth from God.

It ought to be observed, however, that the ultimate ground on which the Westminster divines rest our faith in the Scriptures as the word of God is

the testimony of the Spirit bearing witness in our heart, *by* and *with* the word. As there is a positive bias against the truths which give character to the Bible as a Revelation from God, and a positive blindness of the understanding in regard to spiritual things, which render it impossible that a man in his natural estate should receive or know them, so in the provisions of the economy of grace there is a remedy provided for the blindness by which the darkness of the understanding is removed, and a remedy for the alienation of the will by which the soul is made willing in the day of Christ's kingly power. This testimony of the Spirit, as the Westminster standards teach, is not only *by* the word, but *with* it. There is not only the testimony arising from the subjective conformity of the soul to the objective standard exhibited in the word, but there is also the concurrent testimony borne by the Spirit to the truth of the word itself. Thus, throughout, the mind is dealt with as rational. The Spirit in His regenerating act does not set aside Reason, but, on the contrary, renews it, and, having renewed it, addresses Himself to it. The submission of the soul to God is not a blind submission, nor is the reception of the Divine Revelation and the Saviour it offers an irrational act. The process of conversion is a process of persuasion, as well as a process of spiritual transformation wrought by the omnipotent agency of the Holy Spirit. There is, according to the

representation of these confessional standards, a work of the Spirit which embraces conviction, enlightenment of the mind in the knowledge of Christ, and a persuading of the soul to embrace Him, as well as a renewal of the will and the impartation of spiritual strength. In a word, the Reason, as well as the heart and conscience, is brought into exercise when the Holy Spirit effectually calls the soul and translates it into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

4. Reason having verified the Revelation as a Divinely authenticated communication, has to do with the interpretation of it. It judges of the import of its statements, and determines among conflicting interpretations which is the true one. In the exercise of this prerogative, we have the full warrant of the Scriptures themselves, which urge upon us the duty of searching them, and affirm our responsibility in regard to the doctrines we deduce from them. To this tribunal, as we have seen already, our Saviour submitted His own claims as the Messiah, and to the same arbitrament His apostles appealed in proof of their teachings. Whether our Saviour reasoned with the Jews or with His own disciples, He addressed arguments to their reason, and called upon them to exercise it upon the testimony of Moses and the prophets concerning Himself. And what else was the scope of apostolic preaching but to prove from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ?

In fact, it is impossible for a rational being to

receive, or know, a Revelation at all, without exercising his reason. One revelation is to all intents, purposes, and uses, the same as any other until its contents are examined and its truths apprehended, that is until the Revelation has been rationally considered. This apprehension is indispensable to our reaping any spiritual advantage from the Revelation given us in the Bible, for knowledge of its great essential fundamental truths is one of the conditions of the salvation it reveals.

5. But, as already intimated, Reason cannot rest satisfied with isolated doctrinal deductions from Scripture. It cannot avoid endeavouring to systematise and harmonise these deductions. It is just as natural and as warrantable to classify our deductions from the word of God as from His works, and it is found, as a matter of fact, that all who study either the word, or the works of God, do actually classify their knowledge and endeavour to present their conclusions in systematic form. Reason, therefore, is exercised not only in judging of, or ascertaining, the import of the Revelation, but also in the adjustment and systematic exhibition of its doctrinal contents.

6. In the exercise of these prerogatives Reason is neither infallible nor irresponsible. The Jews rejected the claims of Jesus of Nazareth, though in that rejection they were completing the accumulating evidence whereby His Messiahship was estab-

lished ; and many, in the present day, reject the Scriptures who pride themselves on their standing as enlightened and reasonable men. The fallibility of human reason, however, is no argument against its use, for if the principle involved in such argument were fully carried out, men must cease to exercise their reason in any matter whatever, whether sacred or secular. It is just as common for men to err in the one department as in the other. The only inference warranted in either case is the necessity of caution, and the necessity of observing the laws of thought. No one ever thinks of any other inference from the liability of man to err in things secular, and there can be no reason assigned for any other in relation to error within the sphere of the sacred. The liability of Reason to err is in no case regarded as warranting any authority, whether sacred or secular, civil or ecclesiastical, in attempting to dethrone Reason or suspend the exercise of her high prerogatives. The Jews erred in rejecting Christ, but their error is not ascribed to the exercise of their reason. They are condemned for not exercising their reason aright in judging of His claims. The sin whereby they provoked God, and brought down upon themselves and upon their children the threatened curse, had its origin in the abuse of reason in matters of faith.

LECTURE II.

The Province of the Senses in Matters of Faith.

THIS was, at first, a question between Protestants and Romanists, and originated in connection with the controversy respecting Transubstantiation. In opposition to the alleged change of the bread and wine into the body, soul, and Divinity of Christ, the Reformers appealed to the senses of sight, touch, and taste. To this the Romish theologians replied that the testimony of the senses is not to be heard in the Mysteries of Faith, inasmuch as these Mysteries are above the senses, and faith consists in believing what we do not see. Yes, the Reformers replied, it is true that the senses are not to be heard in every matter of faith, but it is not true that their testimony is not to be admitted when they testify of things sensible and corporeal, which come within their own proper sphere. Within this sphere their testimony is authoritative and ultimate, and from it they cannot be excluded without doing violence to the constitution of our own nature. Constituted as we are, we must trust to the testimony of our senses, and our

doing so is one of the conditions of our progress in knowledge. To distrust them were to arrest all study of external nature and to cast a grave reflection upon the Author of our being.

It is scarcely necessary to formally discuss this question. The most cursory reader of the Scriptures must be aware that both in the Old Testament and the New, God has set the stamp of the most indubitable recognition upon the bodily senses of mankind. Through signs and wonders wrought before men, He has testified to the authoritative commission of His Messengers. It is an unquestionable fact that both our Saviour and His apostles appealed to the senses in matters of faith of the highest importance. The disciples were invited to satisfy themselves in regard to no less a matter than the resurrection of Christ by the senses of sight and touch. To allay their fears and correct their misapprehensions our Saviour said to them: "Why are ye troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; handle Me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken He showed them His hands and His feet" (Luke xxiv. 38-40). In like manner the angels who announced His birth, and those who announced His resurrection, appealed to the senses. By the sense of sight both His birth and His resurrection were to be verified. "He is not here, but is risen. Come, see the place

where He lay." Besides, it must be manifest that any argument which is of force against the testimony of the senses in such matters must also be of force against the testimony of the Apostles, for their testimony rested, ultimately, upon the testimony of their senses. They were witnesses "of what they had heard, of what they had seen with their eyes, of what they had looked upon, and their hands had handled, of the Word of life" (1 John i. 1). These and other like references prove conclusively that the doctrine of Rome on this subject—a doctrine obviously devised in defence of the doctrine of Transubstantiation—is irreconcilable with the teaching of the sacred Scriptures.

Bearing of this Theory on Science and Philosophy.

Professor Flint in his important treatise on Theism (pp. 110—112) takes the ground that the senses are not trustworthy witnesses, and alleges that we have no warrant for the assumption that external objects are what our senses testify. "Change our senses," he says, "and the universe will be thereby changed, everything in it becoming something other than it was before, green perhaps red, the bitter sweet, the loudest noise a gentle whisper, the hardest substance soft." He endorses fully Mill's definition of matter as "the permanent possibility of sensations," and affirms that "the collection of phenomena which

we call the properties of matter is quite unlike the phenomena of mind in this most important respect, that whatever they may be, they are not what they appear to be. A state of mind is what we feel it to be ; a state of matter is certainly not what we seem to ourselves to perceive it to be." On the preceding page, Professor Flint had stated that "we have a practical and relative knowledge of matter which is both exact and trustworthy—a knowledge of its properties from which we can mathematically deduce a multitude of remote consequences of an extremely precise character—but we are hardly entitled to characterise as knowledge at all any of the views which have been propounded as to what itis in itself."

This is simply what Professor Huxley avowed on the same point in his memorable address on the hypothesis that animals are automata, delivered before the British Association at their meeting in Belfast in 1874. It is neither more nor less than Berkeley's idealism over again, and is to be met by the same arguments. The assumption is, that as all our knowledge comes through the medium of consciousness, and as consciousness is a faculty of mind, mind alone can be certainly known.

Remarks on this Phase of the Theory.

1. Professor Flint seems to concede what is scarcely consistent with the distinction he makes between the knowledge we have of matter and the

knowledge we have of mind. He admits that we have a knowledge of the *properties* of matter from which we can mathematically deduce a multitude of remote consequences of an extremely precise character. Now it is not too much to claim that all the knowledge that we have of anything, either within us or without us, is a knowledge of properties. It is just as true of mind as it is of matter, that it is known to us only in and by its properties, and it is by its properties that we distinguish any one thing from any other thing. In conceding that we know the properties of a thing, therefore, it is concluded that we know the thing itself, for the properties are simply the expression of what the thing is in its essential nature, as properties and essence are inseparable.

But Professor Flint still further concedes that this knowledge which we have of the properties of matter furnishes the premises for mathematical conclusions of an extremely precise character. Here then arises a grave difficulty, a difficulty which seems to be altogether insurmountable. How can that which furnishes premises for mathematical deductions of an extremely precise character be represented as not being what it appears to be? If there be no certainty in the premiss, there cannot be certainty in the deduction, and if there be certainty in the conclusion, it is owing to the certainty in the premiss and the mathematical accuracy of the process by which the conclusion has been reached.

2. The theory is contrary to the convictions of mankind. No man, except when under the fascination of a theoretical speculation, believes it or acts upon it. All men believe external objects to be what they appear to be.

3. On this assumption the experimentalist in physics proceeds. He judges of the properties of the elements of matter by the way in which they affect his senses. He takes these elements to be what they appear to him to be, and whether the instrument employed be the retort, or the crucible, or the spectroscope, it is but the means whereby the properties of matter are made to affect the senses. The instrument simply places the senses in the proper position to bear testimony; and they are the sole witnesses in regard to the existence or character of an external world. The mind has nothing else to rely on, and if deceived by them, there is an end to all certainty in physical investigations, and science, so far as it deals with external nature, is neither more nor less than nescience.

4. It is quite true that if our senses were changed, our views of matter would be different; but the change in that case would certainly involve the substitution of deceptive senses for the true. Our senses may come far short of revealing to us all the properties of matter; but constituted as we are, we cannot but accept their testimony as trustworthy as far as it goes. This we must do, or incur the guilt

of preferring against the Author of our being the charge of devising, for the instruction of our minds in the knowledge of His works, an apparatus which is a source of perpetual deception. On this theory the heavens could not be said to reveal the glory of God, nor could it be said that the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are so clearly revealed by the things that are seen that those who do not apprehend His eternal power and Godhead are left without excuse. This conclusion is clearly just; for the only witnesses of what the things which are seen reveal, the only witnesses to testify what are the elements of the glory which the heavens declare, are, ultimately, our bodily senses.

5. And, finally, if the doctrine be true, it is of force against the testimony of the senses altogether. If valid at all, it is just as valid against the reliability of their testimony in regard to the existence of an external world as it is against their trustworthiness in regard to its phenomena, for it is only through its phenomena that the external world makes its existence known. If there is any matter wherein the maxim, *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*, holds, it is in this matter of the testimony of the senses. He who rejects their testimony in regard to any matter which comes fairly within their own proper sphere has no right to recognise as trustworthy their testimony in regard to any other within the same sphere. The warrant for the refusal of

our faith in one instance must hold good throughout the wide domain within which our organs of communication with external nature are called into exercise. In brief, the theory carried out must land its advocates in Berkeleyan idealism—a speculative notion which no man acts upon in his actual intercourse with men and things, and which has its origin in a most inadequate analysis of the contents of consciousness.

As a fitting close to these remarks reference may be made to the conditions under which the senses are to be trusted, as given by Turretine:—1. That the object respecting which they are to testify be placed at the proper distance. 2. That the medium be pure and free from everything which might mar the image. 3. That the organ be employed according to the laws which govern its use. 4. That all the senses by which the object can be cognised be consulted and agree in the same judgment. 5. That they be employed and exercised with due attention, and not hastily. 6. That the imagination be free from disturbing abnormal states, such as are incident to frenzy or fever, causing the mind to imagine that it sees and hears things which it neither sees nor hears. Acting under these conditions, the senses are to be trusted, and must be trusted, if we would avoid doing violence to the laws impressed upon our constitution; and it is under these conditions they act when they testify that the bread and wine in the Eucharist

remain unchanged by the consecrating act of the priest. See "Turretine Loc. Prim. Quæst." xi. th. vii.

Mysticism.

While the term Mysticism has been employed in the history of the Church to designate a great variety of systems, philosophical and theological, there is one radical conception which pervades and characterises them all. They all agree in teaching that the soul derives its knowledge directly from God and not through the medium of *ab extra* instruction. As Cousin expresses it, "Mysticism in philosophy is the belief that God may be known face to face, without anything intermediate. It is a yielding to the sentiment awakened by the idea of the infinite, and a running up of all knowledge and all duty to the contemplation and love of Him." (Quoted from Fleming's Vocabulary in Hodge's "Syst. Theol.," vol. i. p. 62.) Such is Mysticism whether in Philosophy or Religion. By intuition it supersedes all discursive processes of the human mind. It glorifies the spirit at the expense of the letter and of all the outward and ordinary means of grace. The mystic exalts his feelings above all outward instrumentalities, and regards them as a safer guide than the more sure word of prophecy. His feelings, in fact, become his rule of faith, for his interpretations of Scripture are not determined by any reasonable process of exegesis, but by his

own likes and dislikes. As described by Dr. Charles Hodge, "it is the theory, variously modified, that the knowledge, purity, and blessedness to be derived from communion with God are not to be attained from the Scriptures and the use of the ordinary means of grace, but by a supernatural and immediate Divine influence, which influence (or communication of God to the soul) is to be secured by passivity, a simple yielding the soul without thought or effort to the Divine influx" ("Syst. Theol.," vol. i. p. 64).

As already intimated, the mystic cannot, consistently, recognise any outside objective standard or test, by which this inner light, or alleged communication of God to the soul, is to be judged. He who is immediately taught of God can recognise no other Master. As the sacred Scriptures are a record of what the sacred writers received through this same channel, and as these men were favoured with an extraordinary degree of the Divine influence, great respect and a certain measure of authority should be accorded them; but where their teachings appear to conflict with this inner revelation, recourse must be had to methods of interpretation which will reconcile the Scriptures to its *dicta*. Where this expedient fails, the mystic has no alternative but to reject the objective Revelation. A striking instance of the adoption of this alternative occurred in a remarkable address delivered recently by an

eminent statesman. Referring to that passage in the book of Job (chap. v. 7) in which Eliphaz the Temanite speaks of man as being "born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward," and regarding the language as that of Job, the speaker was reported as saying that he differed with him. This passage, moreover, though it occurs in a speech of Eliphaz, is in perfect accord with the doctrine of the Bible in regard to the earthly lot of man since the fall, and may, therefore, be regarded as entitled to all the respect due to an authoritative inspired deliverance. The incident is interesting as showing that in practice the mystic will regulate his creed by his own feelings even where those feelings prompt him to differ with the testimony of the sacred record.

This theory differs from the Rationalistic in this important respect, that it regards the inner light not as constitutional, but as a special personal influence of the Holy Spirit, who, it is alleged, enlightens every man that cometh into the world. According to the former, the light is natural; according to the latter, it is supernatural. Both agree in holding that it is a sufficient guide, not only for the life that now is, but also for that which is to come.

It differs also from the doctrine of Inspiration. In Inspiration there is an immediate communication of truth through the intellectual powers, while, on the Mystic theory, the agency of the Spirit is limited

to the Feelings. In the former case there is a communication of information; in the latter the emotions are stirred, and the man, under the power of these impulses, is borne along to conclusions respecting God and Divine things which it were sinful to gainsay or challenge.

Nor is this theory to be confounded with the Scripture doctrine of Illumination. The Scriptures teach that the children of God shall be all taught of God; but this teaching is always correlative to an existing objective standard, and consists in the enlightenment of the disciple in the saving knowledge of its truths. According to the Mystic theory, the agency of the Spirit is independent of all objective standards, and conveys, immediately, by the excitation of the Feelings, all the knowledge requisite to faith or practice, a knowledge which is the sole ultimate standard and authoritative guide.

The Views of the Quakers, or Friends, on the Inner Light.

Passing by that section of the Quakers who have lapsed from the faith so as to give up all that distinguishes Christianity from Deism, it is proper, in this connection, to notice the views of those who are known as the Orthodox Quakers. These hold all the leading truths of Christianity, including the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity, the person and work of Christ, the personality, deity, and office work

of the Holy Ghost, the original state of man, his fall through transgression, and the ruin and misery thereby brought upon the race, involving their utter inability to know God aright or to do anything spiritually good. They hold with other Christians that there will be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust, of the one to everlasting life and of the other to everlasting punishment, when God will judge the world by that Man whom He hath ordained, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

Touching the Sacred Scriptures, they hold to the common faith that they are given by inspiration of God, and that they contain the whole sum of saving knowledge, and also that whatsoever doctrine or practice is contrary to their teaching is to be rejected, "that they are a declaration of the mind and will of God in and to the several ages in which they were written, and are obligatory on us, and are to be read, believed, and fulfilled by the assistance of Divine grace." They recognise, besides the Scriptures, "no outward judge or test of controversies among Christians," and they are willing to have all their doctrines and practices tried by them, and they "freely admit that whatsoever any do, pretending to the Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures, is to be condemned as a delusion of the devil."

But along with these very satisfactory statements of saving truth, the Quakers hold that the inner light, which they represent as common to all men,

is sufficient, if attended to, to lead men to a knowledge "of their own sin and misery, and to make them sharers of the sufferings of Christ, inwardly; and to make them partakers of His resurrection, in becoming holy, pure, and righteous, and recovered out of their sins" (Evans, quoted by Hodge, vol. i. pp. 90—93).

According to the Quakers, the Church in apostolic times is the model, in all respects, for all times. The provision for the edification of the Christian assembly was spiritual gifts bestowed upon the individual members. These gifts were given to profit withal, and those upon whom they were bestowed were thereby authorised and commissioned to employ them for the benefit of the body. This arrangement was not a provisional one, or designed to meet a special emergency. On the contrary, it was an institution designed to last throughout the Christian dispensation. Of course those who hold this view of the office of the Holy Spirit in the Church must regard the individual members of the body as raised above the necessity of instruction through external instrumentalities. Hence, as a matter of fact, while the Quakers recognise the inspiration and consequent authority of the Sacred Scriptures, they are far from giving them that supreme place, as sources of spiritual knowledge, assigned them by the churches of the Reformation, both Lutheran and Reformed.

Remarks upon this Theory of an Inner Light.

1. In the first place it may be observed that this theory contains an element of truth. It is one of the most precious truths of Revelation that the Holy Spirit holds intercourse with the spirits of God's people, and that this intercourse is immediate. In Regeneration, by His direct agency, He imparts life to the soul dead in trespasses and sin ; in adoption He bears witness with the regenerate that they are the children of God ; in sanctification He renews the soul throughout all its powers, enabling it to die more and more unto sin and live unto righteousness ; and in intercession He acts after a Divine manner, creating, by His omnipotent power, desires after the blessings which Christ has died to purchase and which He lives to bestow. One of the greatest of the triad of blessings embraced in the apostolic benediction is the *κοινωνία*—the communion of the Holy Ghost.

As already intimated, this intercourse is direct between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God, and by it spiritual life is originated and maintained in the soul. It is an intercourse, however, which has its clearly revealed conditions. In the case of adults, one of its conditions is the knowledge of the objective Revelation given in the Sacred Scriptures. The action of the Spirit is correlative to the truths of

Revelation. The fundamental error of the Mystic theory is that it overlooks altogether, or attaches comparatively little importance to this condition.

2. It may be remarked that the Scriptures nowhere teach that such inner spiritual guidance is given to all men. The passages on which Mystics rely are such as the following:—"All thy children shall be taught of the Lord" (Isa. liv. 13; quoted by our Saviour John vi. 45); "I will put My law in their inward parts, and write them in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord" (Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; quoted Heb. viii. 10, 11). Now it may be said of all such passages: 1. That the blessings of which they speak are not universal, but are, on the contrary, limited to those who are in covenant with God. 2. That if they are at all pertinent, they prove too much for the Mystics. Taken literally as the rule for the regulation of the instruction of all men, it must impose, not a mere temporary, but a perpetual silence upon every individual in reference to all others. Such instruction as these passages describe must supersede, and render unnecessary, all instruction by any finite agency, whether human or angelic. Why should one try to instruct another where all are raised above the need of human in-

struction, by the immediate teaching of God and the Divine inscription of His law?

The point to be established is not that the Spirit is given to all believers, but that He is given to all men. The thing to be proved is not that He is given to open the eyes of the understanding to behold and apprehend the truths of an already existing revelation, but that He is given to produce a state of feeling which may, in some way or other, serve as a source of truth and a rule of duty. The thing to be proved is not that the Spirit is given to enforce the light of nature, or the light of God's word, upon the consciences of men, but that He is given to all men as a source of knowledge independent of, and superior to, all standards or rules of duty derived from any external source whatever.

3. In the next place, it may be objected to the Mystic theory that it is in conflict with those passages of Scripture which refer the teachings of every spirit to the extant Revelation, as the supreme and ultimate standard by which every fresh communication is to be judged. Christians are admonished not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits whether they be of God. To this rule there is to be no exception. It is not only to be applied to men, but to angels also. "Though we or an angel from heaven preach unto you any other gospel than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. i. 8). If, as it must be admitted,

the rule thus laid down was laid down by one who was under an extraordinary influence of the Spirit, with what show of consistency can it be held that a man is to be heard and deferred to, who, professing to be under the immediate influence of the same Spirit, not only refuses to submit to such a test, but actually contradicts the doctrines pronounced, by His authority, the ultimate test of all professed evangelical communications ?

According to Mysticism every man is constituted by the inner light a standard and rule to himself, and the standards of Mysticism must be as numerous as are the Mystics. According to the Sacred Scriptures, however, the word of God claims to be the only rule, and to this every man must conform, and by this sure word of prophecy every spirit must be tried.

4. As might be expected, Mysticism is helpless when it is called upon to deal with errorists. It has no standard or criterion whereby to determine the claims of a professed Divine communication. And equally helpless must be the individual who may imagine himself to be under the teaching of this inner light. Were there no other spirit in the universe having access to his mind save the Spirit of God, he might not be so much at a loss to determine whether the influence were Divine ; but how is he to know, apart from some objective standard, whether the influence may not be of the

evil one, or whether the imagined light be not the offspring of a heated imagination?

5. Finally, against Mysticism may be urged the conclusive fact that apart from the objective Revelation there is no evidence that the Holy Spirit has ever led any one to the saving knowledge of God. It is vain to adduce in support of the Mystic theory the instances furnished in the histories of Job and Melchisedec. The latter stands out on the inspired record as an eminent type of the Messiah, as One whose priesthood was above the priesthood of Aaron. His interview with Abraham shows clearly that he knew God, and the office which he held and executed proved that he was acquainted with the way in which God was to be worshipped, and also that he had respect, beyond what Mystics have, to external ordinances. The former, as the narrative states, held intercourse with God, not simply by inner light or subjective impulses, but by audible utterances and direct personal interviews. Job and Melchisedec may be regarded as instances of the continuance of the knowledge of God outside the chosen race, and as proofs that the Revelation made to Noah, and by him transmitted to his posterity, did not immediately perish from the world.

The Romish Theory of the Rule of Faith.

As stated by Baronius, "Illud omne et solum est de fide catholica, quod est revelatum in verbo Dei

et propositum omnibus ab ecclesia Catholica fide Divina credendum." Expounding this statement, Lieberman in his "Theological Institutes" remarks: "This rule is resolved into two parts. The first embraces the word of God, in which, as in its fountain, the whole Revelation is contained. The second embraces the authority of the Church, which elicits the Revelation from the word of God and points it out to men. Two things, therefore, must conspire in order that any doctrine may be a part of the Catholic faith. First, that it be revealed by God through prophets and apostles, or canonical authors; for every revelation afterwards made, does not pertain to the Catholic faith. Second, that the doctrine be propounded by the Church. If both these conditions be fulfilled, the doctrine is to be believed with a Divine Catholic faith. If either be wanting—the Revelation, or the proposal (*propositio*) of it by the Church—it is not to be believed with a Divine Catholic faith. But the second condition cannot be present without the first being present also; for since Christ has promised to the Church the assistance of the Holy Spirit, who should teach and lead her into all truth, she, while this promise, which endureth for ever, remains, can never teach that anything has been revealed which has not been revealed. Nevertheless, something may be revealed by God even in the word, to wit, obscurely, which may not as yet have been propounded by the

Church, because, though revealed in the Divine word, it needs an interpreter, and the Church may not as yet have apprehended the sense of the word of God, written or handed down by tradition, and thus has not as yet defined it, and hence has not as yet proposed either this or that to be believed by faith.

"Now any one will easily understand that when we hypothecate the authority of the Church we do not detract from the authority of the Divine word. The Church does not strike out new doctrines, she brings forth nothing of her own, but teaches those doctrines which are contained in the revealed word of God; and these, as the faithful custodian and mistress of the faith, she sets forth to be believed." . . . "Hence," Lieberman concludes, "the principle remains unshaken that the ultimate source of all revealed Theology is the authority of God revealing.

"The Church possesses the Divine word and brings forth from the Divine word her doctrines; and we, when we hear the Church, are sure that we believe the Divine word and hold that doctrine which Christ has revealed, and which the apostles have left to us either written, or by word of mouth" (vol. i. pp. 387-8).

Rome therefore holds, as Protestants do, that the revealed word of God is the sole rule of faith; but she differs from Protestants in regard to the comprehension of the term "the revealed word of God."

While Romanists hold that all the Scriptures recognised by Protestants are entitled to rank as the word of God, they add to the Canon as held by Protestants a large number of books which Protestants treat as apocryphal and refuse to recognise as entitled to canonical standing as part and parcel of the extant Revelation. Nor is Rome content with adding the Apocrypha to the Canon of Inspiration; to this supplemented Canon she adds Tradition, or what she describes as the word of God orally delivered. Nor is she willing to risk her claims upon an appeal to this complex standard, but arrogates to herself solely and exclusively the office of interpreter—a claim which she founds upon the alleged obscurity of the revealed word, the authority wherewith she has been invested as the ordained instructrix of mankind, and the qualifications she possesses, in virtue of the promised presence of the Holy Spirit, for the execution of the functions of this spiritual office.

The reason which leads Romanists to attach so much importance to Tradition and the apocryphal writings is simply because they find therein a support for some of their distinctive doctrines for which they can claim no foundation in the Canonical books recognised by Protestants. The doctrines which they hold to be taught either fully or exclusively by Tradition are—1. The Canon of Scripture. 2. The full doctrine of the Trinity, including the rank

and relations of the Father, Son, and Spirit. 3. The Incarnation. 4. The perpetual virginity, etc., of the Virgin Mary. 5. Infant baptism. 6. The change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. 7. The doctrine of apostolical succession. 8. The government of the Church by bishops. 9. The threefold order of the priesthood. 10. The grace of Orders. 11. The sacrificial character of the Eucharist. 12. The seven sacraments. 13. The doctrine of purgatory. The slightest inspection of this partial list will satisfy any candid mind at all acquainted with the teaching of the Divine word, that some of these doctrines, such as that of the Trinity and the Incarnation, are clearly revealed in Scripture and in no wise dependent upon Tradition, while others are not only not revealed there, but are either expressly or implicitly contradicted. The concession implied in this appeal to Tradition is worthy of special note. The appeal carries with it the implication that, for doctrines which are the chief distinctive characteristics of her system, Rome can find no satisfactory evidence in the canonical Scriptures recognised by Protestants.

Romish Estimate of the Original Scriptures.

Not satisfied with making void the word of God through her traditions, the Church of Rome, by a decision of the Council of Trent, has placed the Latin Vulgate above the original Hebrew and Greek

texts of Scripture. In the fourth session of that council the following decree was passed :—"Moreover, the same sacred and holy synod, considering that no little advantage may accrue to the Church of God if out of all the Latin editions of the sacred books now in circulation it make known which are to be held as authentic, ordains and declares that the said old and Vulgate edition, which by the long usage of so many ages has been approved in the Church, be held as authentic in public readings, disputations, preachings, and expositions, and that no one may dare or presume to reject it on any pretext whatsoever."

Some Romish writers contend that this decree was not intended to exalt the Latin Vulgate above the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, but simply to express the preference of the Council for that version rather than the other Latin versions then in circulation side by side with it. In support of the charge made by Protestants the following arguments may be urged :—1. The contents of the Vulgate (embracing, as it does, the Apocrypha, the books of which are specified in the decree) differs, canonically, from the Hebrew text. 2. This difference in regard to contents, of course, raises a cardinal question between the two books. According to the Hebrew Bible, the Apocrypha is not a part of the rule of faith, while according to the Vulgate it is of equal authority with any other portion of the record. Here is manifestly a conflict of grave importance

between the two claimants. The point in dispute, however, is settled by the Tridentine decree, and, beyond doubt, is settled in favour of the Latin Vulgate, and against the claims of the original Hebrew. This must be manifest, for the decree pronounces an anathema upon the man who shall not receive the books enumerated in all their parts as they are given in the said Latin version. 3. By ordaining that the Vulgate was to be held authentic in all public lections, disputations, preachings, and expositions, and that no one was to dare or presume to reject it on any pretext whatsoever, the synod evidently constituted it the supreme and ultimate standard of appeal on all occasions where questions of doctrine could possibly arise, for the phrase *quovis prætextu* certainly covers all pretexts, and among others the pretext that the Vulgate does not agree with the Hebrew. The force of the argument from the diversity of the contents of the Latin and Hebrew texts will be more manifest on an examination of the apocryphal books raised by the decree to canonical rank. These books are as follow :— Tobias, Judith, Sequel to the book of Esther, amounting to nearly seven chapters, the book of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, History of Susannah and her children, prefixed to the book of Daniel, the song of the three children inserted in the third chapter of Daniel, the story of Bel and the Dragon appended to that book. The history of Susannah

and her children is given in the LXX., but is omitted in the Vulgate. The list closes with the two books of the Maccabees. There can be no need of argument to satisfy any reasonable mind that a decree establishing a version, differing, by all the books here enumerated, from the original Hebrew, as the ultimate arbiter in all questions of doctrine or discipline, of faith or morals, does, *ipso facto*, set aside the Hebrew as the standard of revealed truth.

Romish Doctrine respecting Tradition.

As employed by Romanists, the term Tradition designates the oral instructions of Christ and His apostles, which were not committed to writing, but handed down to the early Fathers, from whom we have them uncorrupted and possessed of all the authority of the Sacred Scriptures themselves. These traditions thus committed to the custody of the Church, and by her transmitted from age to age, are to be received as the word of God, and are to be believed and reverenced with the same devotional regard as the Scriptures themselves, and if any one, knowingly and deliberately, treats them with contempt, he incurs thereby an anathema. The ground of this anathema is that the Church, in transmitting these Divinely uttered traditions, has been infallibly guided by the Holy Spirit.

These traditions have been variously classified, as historical, dogmatical, liturgical. Bellarmine divides

them into—1. Divine—those uttered by our Lord Himself. 2. Apostolical—those spoken by the Apostles. 3. Ecclesiastical—those which relate to rites and ceremonies instituted by the Church. The last-named class are not regarded as of equal importance with those embraced under the others, but they are, nevertheless, regarded as obligatory upon the faithful, having been ordained by a Church claiming the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost.

The reasons assigned by Romanists for having recourse to tradition are twofold, viz., the imperfection and obscurity of Scripture. The former defect is met by the matter of tradition, and the latter by the character of it. As a rule of faith and practice, they allege, the Scriptures are incomplete, as they do not supply information on such subjects as have been already enumerated. This defect was provided for by our Lord and His apostles, by oral instruction handed down through an infallible Church. Besides this quantitative deficiency, the Scriptures are qualitatively defective, as they contain things hard to be understood, which require explanation, and this defect is provided for in the authoritative expositions supplied by Tradition. Moehler in his "Symbolik" defines Tradition as "the word living on in the hearts of the faithful." With him it is the outcome of a peculiar instinct ingenerated by the education of the faithful and handed down under the infallible guidance of the Church. He accounts for the addi-

tions to the sum total of the Revelation which have been accumulating from age to age of the Church's history by referring them to the growing doctrinal consciousness of the organisation. The Church, he alleges, does not add to the teaching of Christ and His apostles, but grows more and more into the spirit of it, and acquires, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, clearer views and a fuller knowledge of its import. The Immaculate Conception and the Infallibility of the Pope are, therefore, not to be regarded as dogmas added to the rule of faith, but are to be viewed as doctrines which, although always, from Apostolic times, contained in the Revelation committed to the custody of the Church, were, nevertheless, not clearly and fully apprehended by her prior to the times of their formal enunciation and ratification.

Romish Arguments in Support of Tradition.

The following are the chief arguments advanced by the Church of Rome in support of Tradition :— 1. All the discourses and conversations of Christ and His apostles were not committed to writing. 2. The instructions communicated in these discourses and conversations would be carefully treasured in the memories of the disciples, and by them sedulously guarded and faithfully handed down to their successors. 3. The Scriptures themselves recognise the

existence of Tradition in apostolic times, and exhort the faithful "to hold them fast" (2 Thess. ii. 15). 4. The Fathers appeal to traditions extant in their day, which were not contained in Scripture, and base upon them doctrinal conclusions. 5. The *argumentum ad hominem.* They allege that Protestants are compelled to fall back on Tradition in establishing doctrines for which they have no other proof, for example the Canon of Scripture. In receiving the Scriptures as the word of God, it is alleged that Protestants admit the authority of Tradition. 6. Many modern theologians, as Moehler, try to vindicate the doctrine philosophically by representing Tradition as a gradual historical development of the truths of Scripture as, under the teaching of the Spirit, they are brought more and more to the consciousness of the Church. 7. As already seen, the Council of Trent assumes Tradition as a primary fact without attempting any proof.

Arguments against the Romish Doctrine.

In reply to the foregoing arguments the following are submitted:—1. While Protestants admit that all the discourses of Christ and His apostles were not committed to writing, and that these sayings would be carefully treasured by the disciples, they do not admit that these sayings are now extant and capable of authentication, or that they were designed to constitute a part of the permanent rule of faith.

The question cannot be repressed: "Why should sayings of such importance to the interests of the Church be committed to the channel of Tradition, while sayings of far less importance have been committed to writing?" It was surely as important to know that there is a real sacrifice in the Eucharist as to be told that Paul left a cloak at Troas. It was certainly of as much interest to the Church of God to know that He has kindled, for the further and final purification of His saints, a purgatorial fire of as intense a flame as the fiery stream of Tophet, as to be told that the barbarous people of Melita lighted a fire to warm Paul and his companions after their escape from shipwreck. Are we to believe that He who inspired His servants to make infallible record of the less important, nevertheless, gave no such heed to the communication of truths which, if we are to credit the account of them given by Romanists, must take rank as among the most important doctrines of the analogy of the faith? Granting the Romish premises of unrecorded discourses, therefore, Protestants deny their conclusion of an unrecorded transmission. The inference is altogether inadequate. It is not a sufficient inference from the fact that our Lord and His apostles spake such things as Rome recounts that they would be carefully remembered, sacredly guarded, and faithfully transmitted. The premises warrant a much more sweeping conclusion. If

Christ and His apostles taught, orally, that the Eucharist is a real sacrifice, *pro vivis et mortuis*, that the Christian ministry is a sacrificing priesthood, through which alone men have access to God, and that for the overwhelming majority of those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ there remaineth after this earthly pilgrimage, and prior to the bliss of heaven, a process of purgation, involving sufferings unutterable, we are warranted in the conclusion that such doctrines would not have been left to the memories of fallible men, but would have been committed to writing side by side with the foremost truths of the Divinely inspired record. There can be no reason whatever rendered for singling out doctrines of such magnitude and committing them to the dubious channel of Tradition. On the contrary, doctrines intended, as Rome alleges, to supplement and expound the Rule of Faith, would, of all others, be most likely to obtain a place in the Inspired Record.

2. Protestants argue from the well-known imperfection of Tradition as a medium of preserving and transmitting doctrine. Who could speak with certainty of the doctrines of the Reformation if we did not possess the symbols of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches and the writings of the leading Reformers? No one relies on the reports which have come down through the channel of Tradition when treating of the doctrinal views of Luther, or

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Zwingli, or Calvin, or Knox. Trustworthy historians do not depend upon current gossip, nor do theologians place their confidence in any source of information short of original documents, or well-attested copies of the same, or faithful renderings of their contents.

3. With regard to the arguments in support of Tradition which Romanists found on such passages as 1 Corinthians xv. 3, and xi. 34, 2 Thessalonians ii. 15, John xvi. 12, 1 Timothy i. 1, 13, 14, and ii. 2, 2 Timothy iii. 8, 2 John 12, 3 John 13, 14, it may be remarked—(1) That a doctrine may be called a tradition however communicated, whether orally or by writing, as is clear from one of the passages here enumerated, where Paul urges the Thessalonians to stand fast and hold the traditions which they had been taught, whether by word or his epistle. (2) It is manifest on examination that the other passages furnish no warrant for the Romish doctrine. Take as an example 1 Corinthians xi. 34, which occurs at the close of the Apostle's remonstrance against the abuse of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper by the Church at Corinth. In the course of this remonstrance he lays down a principle which is directly antagonistic to the principle on which Rome proceeds. He corrects the abuse in question by a reference to the original institution—a principle which our Lord had previously acted upon in reforming abuses of the institution of marriage. The sin of the Corinthians consisted in their departure from what the

Apostle had received from the Lord Jesus and delivered unto them, and in the carnal unbrotherly manner in which they had engaged in a service of such high spiritual significance, and which was designed to be a symbol of brotherly fellowship. All that he corrects, he corrects by the standard already delivered to them, and all that he speaks of further as needing correction, he promises "to set in order" when he should come to Corinth. When this Corinthian reformation was completed, therefore, all that was done was done by apostolic authority, and nothing left to be regulated by rules or rites treasured up in the memories of a Church which showed herself so ready to forget, even in the Apostle's own day, the most explicit instructions in relation to the most sacred of all the ordinances of Christianity. The instance in question furnishes of itself sufficient proof that no church can be trusted to transmit any instruction apart from a written, authoritative inspired record.

4. As to the argument from the usage of the Fathers, Protestants reply that the Romish argument is altogether fallacious, depending upon the equivocal meaning of the term tradition. Their argument from the mere occurrence of this word, is like the argument for Episcopacy from the occurrence of the word bishop. Assuming that the word bishop in the first centuries of the Christian Church meant what prelatists now designate by it, they quote

passages from the early Fathers in which the term bishop occurs, and think they have thereby established their position that prelacy is an institution of immemorial antiquity. In like manner the advocates of Tradition play upon the word tradition. They assume that it meant with the Fathers what it means with themselves, and think that the mere mention of the word by a Father proves that he held their views regarding this alleged source of Divine truth. It has been shown already that this word was employed by Paul, in addressing the Thessalonians, to designate the truths which he had himself delivered to them, whether by letter or by word of mouth. As this reference to former teaching occurs in his second epistle, it is manifest that he means by the traditions communicated "by epistle" those instructions delivered in his first epistle. According to the Pauline usage, therefore, the doctrinal truths of the first epistle to the Thessalonians may be called traditions. This usage was a usage of the Greek language, and common to Greek writers, or Paul would not have employed it, for he could both speak and write Greek; and no argument founded upon it in support of the Romish special use of the term can be historically or Scripturally sustained. It cannot be shown that the Fathers, on whose usage Romanists rely, used the term in the Romish sense, or that they meant anything more than what Protestants mean when they speak

of the faith of the people of God in all ages of their history.

All this reasoning is confirmed by the express testimony of the Fathers, who always make their final appeal to Scripture and place it above all other authorities, as the ultimate standard by which all doctrines are to be adjudged. Tertullian, for example, in his book against Hermogenes (chap. 21), says: "Adoro Scripturæ plenitudinem," and adds: "Scriptum esse doceat Hermogenes, aut si non est scriptum, timeat illud væ adjicientibus." And in his tractates against Heretics, this same father writes: "Nobis curiositate opus non est post Christum, nec inquisitione post evangelium. Quum credimus, hoc primum credimus, nihil esse quod ultra credere debeamus." Jerome shows himself to be of the same mind in his comment on Matthew xxiii., when he says: "Quod de Scripturis auctoritatem non habet, eadem facilitate contemnitur, qua probatur." In a similar strain Augustine writes in his book "De Doctrina Christi" (lib. ii. cap. 29): "In his quæ aperte posita sunt in Scripturis, inveniuntur ea omnia, quæ continent fidem moresque vivendi." Basil, in his sermon "De Fide," delivers a like judgment: "Infidelitatis argumentum est, et signum superbiae, aliquid vel eorum quæ scripta sunt infirmare, aut eorum quæ non scriptæ sunt introducere." Irenæus, in his treatise against Heretics (book iii. cap. 1), expresses the same estimate of the

Scriptures : " Non per alios dispositionem salutis nostræ cognovimus, quam per eos per quos evangelium pervenit ad nos, quod quidem præconiaverant, postea vero per Dei volentatem in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt, columnam et fundamentum fidei nostræ futurum." (See Turretine, " De Scrip." quæst. xvi. th. xx. See also Goode's " Divine Rule of Faith and Practice," chaps. ix. and x.)

These references are sufficient to prove that the Fathers, to whom Rome professes to appeal with such confidence, held very different views respecting the authority of Scripture and Tradition from those advocated by her theologians and assumed by the Council of Trent. With them the Scriptures were the touchstone by which all doctrine and all doctors were to be tried. They believed that nothing is to be believed besides what is written therein, and that there is to be found therein all that pertains to faith and life. Every attempt to weaken anything taught in Scripture, or to introduce anything not taught therein, was regarded as a proof of unbelief and a sign of pride. If the Fathers are to have a voice in the settlement of this question, surely those here quoted are worthy of a hearing, and the passages cited prove, beyond doubt, that their views were the same as those held by Protestants.

5. To the *argumentum ad hominem* that Protestants receive the Scriptures as the word of God on the authority of Tradition, it may be answered—

(1) That the allegation is false. It is a fundamental of Protestantism that the ultimate ground of our full persuasion that the Scriptures are the word of God is the testimony of the Spirit bearing witness by and with the truth in our hearts. (2) In appealing to the testimony of the Church respecting the canonicity of a book of Scripture, Protestants simply accept the testimony of the Church to a matter of fact. They do what Lardner does so exhaustively in his "Credibility": they show, by reference to the writings of the Fathers, what books were regarded by them and received by all Christians as the word of God, and they cite as witnesses in support of the Protestant canon the enemies of Christianity as well as its friends. Celsus and Porphyry, Julian, and Manes, and Marcion, are made to testify as well as Tertullian, or Jerome, or Augustine, or Basil. It is one thing to cite the chief of the Fathers as witness on a question of fact, and a very different thing to appeal to their judgment as the ground of our faith. The character of their testimony precludes the possibility of such estimate of it. While their language proves what was regarded as the word of God in their day, it proves also that they regarded the word as resting upon its own authority and not upon the authority of themselves or those from whom they received it. (3) Besides, Protestants do not recognise the Fathers as ultimate authorities on any question of faith or practice. If a Father

represents an apostle as teaching doctrines contrary to the analogy of the faith, we have no alternative but to reject his account of the apostolic teaching, or to reject the written word of God. It is surely more reasonable, in such cases, to hear what the Apostles themselves say than to accept the patristic version of their teaching.

6. Touching the modern theory of Tradition, as a gradual development of the doctrines of Scripture as they come more and more to the consciousness of the Church, it may be remarked that it is one thing for the people of God, in the progress of the Church's history, and through collision with errorists, to elicit more fully and define more accurately the teaching of God's word in the several departments of Theology proper, Anthropology, Soteriology, Ecclesiology, and Eschatology, and a widely different thing to add to the existing record doctrines which cannot be established from it or harmonised with it.

Protestants, moreover, do not rest satisfied with a mere exposure of the weakness of the Romish arguments : they go further, and argue positively—

1. From the conditions necessary to an infallible transmission of the oral instructions of Christ and His apostles. If the Apostles themselves required the presence and agency of the Holy Ghost to enable them to place, infallibly, on record, the instructions communicated orally by Christ which we find in the Gospels, surely those who succeeded

them were in equal need of the like guidance in transmitting the alleged evangelical and apostolical traditions. Nothing short of such spiritual supernatural agency could guarantee the infallible transmission of these alleged oral utterances.

Of course it can be said in reply that this argument will not be regarded by Romanists as of any weight against their position, seeing that they claim for their Church the guidance in question. Of such guidance, there is, however, not only no promise in Scripture, but no evidence in the history of the doctrinal deliverances of the Church that claims it. In vain is this claim advanced in face of the facts of that Church's history. It is just as clear that through her traditions she has made void the plainest teachings of Christ and His apostles as it was in Christ's day that the Jewish Church had made void the word of God by their traditions. If we are to apply to this claim the test "By their fruits ye shall know them," the conclusion is unavoidable that a Church which has erred from the clearly revealed truths of Scripture cannot have been under the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost.

2. Protestants deny the Romish interpretation of those promises of Christ to be with His Church always, and to send for her guidance the gift of the Holy Ghost. In so far as that promise extended beyond the Apostles and Evangelists to the Church generally, it was not a promise of guidance to the

Church as understood by the Church of Rome, but to the Church in the Protestant acceptation of the term. In other words, the Church to which the promise of infallible guidance was given is the Church which Christ has purchased with His blood, and to which He guarantees eternal life. As this Church is not identical with any outward visible organisation, no such organisation, whether Romish or Protestant, can lay claim to it.

But besides Rome errs not only in her idea of the Church to which these promises are made, but in what she embraces under the promise. Wrong in her view of the Church, she is wrong also in what has been promised to the Church. Whereas Christ has simply guaranteed the Church (His mystical body) against a lapse from the firm foundation of saving truth, Rome regards His promise as securing her (the outward visible organisation with the Pope as its head) against error in regard to any matter of faith or morals. The claim advanced is that the Church, in this organic Romish sense of the term, has all the qualifications and endowments and all the prerogatives of the Church under the immediate government of the original apostolate. In view of this claim, it may very reasonably be replied that, if true, it proves too much. If the Church of Christ has been gifted with a permanent apostolate to guide her in all matters of faith and morals, what need is there for Tradition? But suffice it to say

that the interpretation put upon such promises of guidance as Christ has made to His people is at war with the plain meaning of the passages relied on, and with the analogy of the faith, and would prove, if they be taken in the Romish sense, that the entire organism which she calls the Church shall never perish or be plucked out of His hand.

3. In the next place, Protestants very fairly urge as an argument against the Romish doctrine the impossibility of deciding satisfactorily between conflicting traditions. The criterion assumed by Romanists, viz., "Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus," that which has been always held, everywhere, and by all, is manifestly not accessible everywhere, always, and by all. While it is freely admitted that the consent of all Christians, in all ages, and everywhere, cannot be accounted for except on the assumption that the doctrine in which all concur is one of the Christian verities, still it is equally clear that this common consent cannot be ascertained. It is vain to search for it in the writings of the Fathers, for no theologian of any age can claim to speak for the whole Church of his day. The Fathers, moreover, contradict one another, and are often inconsistent with themselves, while it must be confessed that their writings—as, for example, in the case of the Ignatian Epistles—have been tampered with and corrupted in the interest of error.

This criterion, as used by Rome, is liable to this

further objection : that its chief terms are robbed of their true comprehension. Taken in its obvious meaning, the criterion reaches back throughout the whole history of the Church, among all people and lands and languages ; but as employed by Rome, the universal terms " semper," " ubique," "ab omnibus," are limited to the history of that Church, to those countries in which she has held sway, and to the organisation of which the Pope of Rome is the head. " Always " means—as it has ever been held by her ; " everywhere " means—in all places within her pale ; and " by all " means—by all Romanists. In a word, she alone is the Church, and what she has always held is what the Church has always held.

Now even though it were conceded that the Church of Rome is the Church to the exclusion of all other visible organisations, it would not follow that the criterion requisite for the testing of Tradition is to be found in her doctrinal deliverances. Her distinctive doctrines have not been always held by her. The Church of Rome of the present day is a very different institution from the Church at Rome in Paul's day ; and throughout her history she has been adding to the doctrines of Scripture the commandments of men. And even within her own pale her doctrines have not been held by all. It is an historical fact that in the course of her mutations she has sanctioned the most conflicting doctrinal systems. Arianism, Augustinianism, Semi-

Pelagianism, have all held authoritative sway within her pale, each in turn receiving formal sanction from her popes and councils. As churches do not pass from one doctrinal system to another instantaneously and unanimously, it is not unreasonable to assume that there were diversities of opinion and doctrinal contentions agitating her communion while these changes were in progress. Nor is this a mere assumption. On the contrary, it is an historical fact. Rome boasts of her doctrinal unity and, in controversy, makes much of the doctrinal contentions which disturb and rend the different Protestant communions; but this boasting is groundless, as the history of the bitter controversies between the Franciscans and Dominicans abundantly attests. These two orders represent as widely diverse schools of Theology as are to be found within the pale of Protestantism. "They differed respecting the nature of Divine co-operation, the measure of Divine grace necessary to salvation, the unity of form in man (or personal identity), and many other subjects which cannot be here enumerated." And what is worthy of special remark in view of recent Romish legislation, they differed on the question of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, Duns Scotus, the Franciscan leader, endeavouring to defend and demonstrate that doctrine against the Dominicans. (See Mosheim vol. ii. pp. 470-1.) In presence of this and like theological disputations the criterion

"Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus," must be taken at considerable discount. At no stage in the history of the Church of Rome could such criterion have been applied.

Nor can the common consent of all Christians be found in the decisions of councils. In the first place, these councils had no existence prior to the fourth century, and cannot, therefore, be accepted as exhibiting the faith of the preceding centuries, apart from other and corroborative testimony. These preceding centuries, however, in which no councils were held, are by far the most important, lying, as they do, nearest to the Apostolic period. In the next place, no council ever represented fully the entire Church. This fact is, of course, fatal to the claim put forth by Rome to that element of the criterion expressed by "ubique," while the inharmonious character of the decisions of these partial councils subverts her claims in regard to every point embraced in this crucial test.

A glance at the creeds and their history will suffice to show that the necessary criterion is not to be found in them. They lack the all-important attributes of antiquity, comprehensiveness, and concord. Even the so-called Apostles' Creed, which is the most ancient, originating probably in the second century, and gradually attaining its present form, is not ancient enough, as it is manifestly not comprehensive enough to test the dogmas of Tradition.

Protestants receive all its deliverances and yet reject every distinctive doctrine of Rome.

And this leads to the general argument that common consent can be urged in favour of no doctrine peculiar to Romanists, while it cannot be adduced in support of doctrines which both hold in common. In a word, the doctrines in behalf of which common consent is available are the exceedingly general doctrines of the Apostles' Creed, along with whose propositions, as already stated, the most conflicting doctrines on the leading features of the economy of Redemption may be held.

4. Another reason for rejecting Tradition is to be found in the unquestionable fact that it subverts the authority of Scripture as the rule of faith and practice. Such has been the effect of Tradition wherever it has been accepted, whether among Jews or Christians. The Jewish doctrine on this subject is so like the Romish that it cannot be passed over without notice. According to the rabbis the law received by Moses on Mount Sinai was divided into the written and the oral law. The latter, they allege, was delivered by Moses orally to Joshua, by Joshua to the seventy elders, by the seventy elders to the prophets, and by the prophets to the great synagogue, and so handed down until it was recorded in the Talmud. Substitute for Moses Christ, and for Joshua the Apostles, and for the elders the

Apostolic Fathers, etc., etc , and you have the antitype of the story of the Jewish tradition. Alike in origin and aim, the two systems have been alike in their effects. As it fared with the word of God under the tradition of the Jews, so has it fared with it under the tradition of Rome. In both cases the written word was explained by the tradition, and made subject to it, so that the tradition set the Scriptures aside and superseded them as the rule of faith.

5. The rule furnished by Tradition is not accessible to the mass of the people of God, who are nevertheless responsible to Him for their belief. It requires no argument to prove that for the ordinary membership of any church, Tradition is a fountain sealed. It is manifest that only the learned can know what has been held "always," "everywhere," and "by all." Indeed, the learned themselves, as the history of doctrinal controversies abundantly testifies, are not agreed regarding the teaching of Tradition. If this be true of men whose lives of learned leisure have been devoted to such investigations, surely the vast body of believers must be utterly incompetent to ascertain its teachings, or employ them as a rule of faith and practice. This unquestionable fact is, of itself, fatal to the claims of Tradition, for all that God has made known in the communications of His will is intended for the enlightenment of His Church, and not simply for the information of church officers or men of culture.

6. The doctrine of Rome on this subject is exposed to the objection that Tradition, even on her own admission, requires an interpreter. This objection is a grave one against the claims of Tradition, for one of its chief ends is to interpret the written word. It cannot be said in reply that this objection lies equally against the written word as a rule of faith, for Tradition, to serve the chief end for which it has been given, should be so plain as to need no explanation. Instead of possessing this essential quality, however, the fact is notorious that this guide to the understanding of the written word is so obscure and contradictory as to need, as Rome herself admits, an authoritative interpreter and harmoniser.

7. Finally, the doctrines which Tradition is adduced to support are false, and contrary to the teaching of the Sacred Scriptures, which Romanists themselves acknowledge as part of the Divine Revelation. This contradiction imposes upon those who are asked to receive such teaching the necessity of rejecting the Scriptures, or rejecting the traditions of Rome.

LECTURE III.

Authority of the Church as a Teacher.

THE subject of Tradition, as must be now apparent, leads of necessity to the kindred subjects of the functions of the Church as a teacher, the authority with which she has been invested, and the qualifications wherewith she has been endowed for the execution of this all-important office. The written word is imperfect and obscure. It does not embrace all the truths which men require to know in order to salvation, and besides it is so obscure and hard to be understood, even on those subjects of which it treats, that there is need for Tradition to interpret it. This tradition itself, however, needs an interpreter, and for this office the Church has been commissioned and endowed, and to her both the written word and the oral instructions left by Christ and His Apostles for the guidance of His people have been committed. These steps in the progress of the argument lead naturally, as they are designed to lead, to the conclusion that the Church to whose custody these oracles, written and oral, have been given in trust, is absolutely infallible, and

as this Church is none other than the Church of Rome, the attribute of infallibility is hers to the exclusion of all other claimants, and all men are bound to submit to her decisions.

The Seat of this Infallibility.

Romanists, until recently, were not agreed regarding the seat of this alleged infallibility, one party, the Italian or Ultramontane party, holding that this Divine guidance was guaranteed to the Pope as Christ's vicegerent, and to him when speaking *ex cathedra*, or officially, while the other party, the Gallican or Cismontane party, holding that the seat of the infallibility is in the Pope acting together with the counsel and consent of his fellow-bishops. In the Vatican Council of 1870, the Ultramontane theory triumphed, and is now the doctrine of the Church, which no Romanist may call in question, even mentally, without incurring by such questioning the dread penalty of excommunication.

Romish Arguments in support of this Claim.

1. They argue from the end for which Christ instituted His Church. As He appointed and commissioned her to teach all nations, and to be the light of the world, it is not unnatural to conclude that He would qualify her for the efficient discharge of the duties of this great office. No measure of guidance

which would not render her infallible in her communications of Divine truth, it is argued, could fit her for the execution of the functions of this high calling.

2. As might be expected from the very design of her institution and the issues depending upon her right discharge of her sacred trust, this needed guidance was promised her. Our Lord promised to be with her always even to the end of the world, and assured her that He would send the Holy Ghost to lead her into all truth.

3. This promised guidance has been actually vouchsafed. The Holy Ghost has been given, not simply to the original Apostolate, but to their successors in office, as the promise implied.

4. It is argued from the admission of Protestants who claim and exercise the prerogative of deciding in matters of faith and practice, and of admitting or rejecting candidates for membership, and of exercising discipline upon the erring within their respective communions, that, practically, they assume in their own case all that Rome claims for herself. How can a church destitute of the attribute of Infallibility venture upon the exercise of such prerogatives as these functions imply?

5. Romanists urge in argument the reasonableness of the thing claimed. What can be more reasonable than that one man or a small number of men should submit to the judgment of the entire Church?

To these Arguments Protestants reply—

1. That Rome errs in confounding the Church invisible with the Church visible, the true mystical body of Christ with the outward organisation. It is true that Christ has promised to be with His Church to the end of time and to lead her by His Spirit into all truth, but the Church to which He has made these promises is His own true Church, consisting of none save true believers. It is vain to say that such promises of His presence and guidance have been made to those who are not in vital union with Him and not dwelt in by His Spirit. As has been already shown, if these promises were made to the external society which Rome calls the Church, it must follow that the external organisation, as such, shall without fail inherit eternal life; for it is just as true that Christ has promised eternal life to His Church, as that He has promised infallible guidance. If then, as Rome herself admits, there have been many embraced in the visible body, even many of its chief office-bearers, including bishops, cardinals, and popes, who were not only ignorant and foolish, but positively wicked and infidel, it is manifest that there is no alternative but to hold either that the promises in question were not made to such, or that they, despite their ignorance, folly, wickedness, and infidelity, have inherited eternal life!

2. Romanists not only confound the Church in-

visible with the outward visible organisation, but they limit the outward organisation to the chief pastors. The promises, they teach, were made to the Apostles and their successors, the bishops, who are also Apostles. In a word, the doctrine of Infallibility stands or falls with the doctrine of Apostolical Succession. This doctrine has been syllogistically stated as follows :—

Major —All men are bound to receive the teaching and submit to the authority of Apostles on pain of perdition.

Minor —Diocesan bishops are Apostles.

Conclusion — All men are bound to receive the teaching and submit to the authority of diocesan bishops on pain of perdition.

Protestants and Romanists are agreed on the major; Romanists and Anglicans are at one on both major and minor; but all true Protestants, while holding to the major, reject the minor as destitute of Scriptural authority and irreconcilable with the most unquestionable facts of history.

3. This statement of the case is most warrantable, and it shows that one of the chief points at issue is the Scriptural idea of the Church. As this topic belongs to another branch, it cannot be fully discussed here. This much, however, may be said: that the Scriptures teach that the Church of God, whether under the Old Testament or the New, embraces none save those who are the children of

the promise—those who are of faith, who are blessed with faithful Abraham. Under the Old Testament, a man, despite his circumcision, might not be a Jew; and under the New, none save those who have been baptised with the Holy Ghost, and born "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," are recognised as sons. To such, and to such alone, whether organised or scattered and persecuted, wandering about in sheepskins and goatskins, dwelling in dens and caves of the earth, has Christ made promise of His presence and the guidance of His Spirit. In a word, all that is necessary to the utter overthrow of all the arrogant claims of the Romish hierarchy to the exclusive possession of the attributes and prerogatives of the Church, is to establish from Scripture the true idea of that institution.

4. Not only is the Church of Rome wrong in regard to the import and comprehension of the Church, but she is wrong also in regard to the comprehension and import of the promises on which she bases her claims. She interprets these promises of guidance into all truth, as conveying to the Church, in all time, a guarantee of absolute immunity from error in regard to all matters of faith or practice. In the case of the original Apostolate the promise of the Spirit to lead them into all truth secured them against all error in expounding the way of life and completing the Revelation of the

Divine will ; but these promises, so far as they were intended for the whole Church and for all time, had no such meaning, and conveyed no such guarantee. They secured the entire Mystical body against fundamental error in the interpretation of the written word ; but this is all the conclusion that the history of the Church, whether under the Old Testament or the New, will warrant.

5. Protestants, as already stated, argue against the Romish claim to infallibility from the historical fact that she has erred again and again on questions of fundamental importance. As already stated, the recognised authorities of the Church of Rome have decided in favour of Arianism against the Deity of our Lord ; in favour of Pelagianism against the Scripture doctrine of Original Sin, human inability, and the office work of the Holy Ghost in regeneration. She has, like her Old Testament prototype, by her traditions and decisions, made void the word of God, and marred His temple by building upon apostolic foundations the hay and stubble of her own inventions.

6. Protestants argue from the clearly revealed right and duty of private judgment. If the doctrine of Rome be true, private judgment in matters of faith is, of course, out of the question. The decisions of an infallible judge cannot be submitted to any other tribunal, public or private. Rome not only admits this inference, but insists upon it. She will

permit no human authority to pronounce upon the justice of her decisions. The only alternative, after she has given her deliverance, is submission or anathema. Every passage of Scripture, therefore, which recognises the right and duty of private judgment is an argument against her assumptions as the ultimate arbitress on all questions of faith and morals.

7. Protestants find an argument against Rome's claim to Infallibility as the ultimate and exclusive authority in the fact that Christ and His Apostles never referred to any other arbiter than the Holy Scriptures. "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead" (Luke xvi. 29-31). To these Christ Himself appealed in proof of His Messiahship; and to these also His apostles directed their hearers. "We have," says the Apostle Peter, "a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts" (2 Peter i. 19). There is a very notable instance of this deference to the authority of Scripture recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, at the first meeting of the General Synod at Jerusalem. There were present elders, Apostles, and brethren; an Apostolic verdict was delivered by no less a personage than Peter himself, and yet that sentence was

not allowed to stand alone, but was confirmed by a quotation from Scripture by the Apostle James. This use-and-wont of Christ and His Apostles proves conclusively the Protestant doctrine as against the Romish ; for the appeal was simply a call upon those before whom it was made to judge of the harmony of the doctrine propounded by the appellants with the doctrine set forth in the written word. Such an appeal establishes two things: (1) the ultimate and supreme authority of Scripture, and (2) the right and duty of the exercise of private judgment, neither of which can be reconciled with the Romish doctrine.

8. Protestants argue *e concessis*, from the fact that Romanists themselves appeal to Scripture in support of the claims of their Church as a teacher. They quote, for example, John xvi. 13 : "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will lead you into all truth," etc. They quote also Matthew xxviii. 20 : "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." These and like passages are their chief reliance when they proceed to establish their claims as the sole authoritative teachers of mankind. In this appeal to Scripture, they concede, by implication, all that is needed for the establishment of the antagonistic Protestant position, for they admit thereby that the authority of the Church to teach at all, rests upon Scripture. But if the Church derives her authority as a teacher from Scripture, surely the

same authority must be necessary for what she teaches, and her teachings, for which its authority cannot be adduced, cannot be regarded as obligatory upon the consciences of men.

9. Touching the decision of the Vatican Council regarding the seat of the infallibility, it may be fairly claimed that that decision is self-destructive; for if the Council was infallible, the decision was not true, because the point decided was that the seat of the infallibility was not in the Council, but in the Pope. On the other hand, if the decision was true, the Council was not infallible; for the thing declared was that the Pope and not the Council was the sole possessor of that attribute. That decision, therefore, has placed the members of the Romish Church in a most perplexing dilemma. If they accept the decision, they obey a body of men who, on their own showing and by their own solemn decree, had no warrant to propound the doctrine, and if they do not obey it, they incur an anathema. In the one case they accept the doctrine of the papal infallibility on the authority of a council which, on its own confession, was not infallible, and, in the other, they reject a doctrine which was uttered by an infallible authority.

It is therefore clear that the arguments advanced by Romanists in support of their doctrine of Tradition, and of the claims of their Church as the sole, authoritative, infallible teacher of mankind, will not

bear investigation, and equally clear that "the word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him."

The Protestant Doctrine in regard to the Rule of Faith.

Rejecting the Rationalistic, Mystical, and Romish theories of the Rule of Faith, Protestants hold that this Rule is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament alone. In taking this ground the Reformers did not regard themselves as rejecting the historic faith of the Church, or as constructing, for the first time, a system of Christian Dogmatics. They were, on the contrary, as Calvin has demonstrated in his preface to his "Institutes" (his immortal appeal to the King of the French), careful to show that they were propounding no new doctrine. Dr. Martensen, in his "Christian Dogmatics" (p. 34), advances this claim as peculiar to the Lutheran Reformation. "The Lutheran Reformation," he says, "in its original form, took a positive attitude towards both dogmatic and ritual tradition, in so far as it was *œcumenical* tradition, *i.e.* so far as it bore the mark of no particular church, being neither Greek Catholic nor Roman Catholic, but simply Catholic. Accordingly," he says, "the evangelical Church adopts the œcumenical symbols, the Apostolic, the Nicæan, and the Athanasian, as the

purest expression of dogmatic tradition. Thus Luther's catechism retains, in the Ten Commandments, the three creeds, the Lord's Prayer, and the doctrine of the sacrament of baptism and of the altar, the same fundamental elements in which primitive Christianity was propagated among the common people through the darkness of the middle ages. Thus, too, the Reformers pointed to a series of testimonies taken from the early Church, a *consensus Patrum*, in proof of the primitive character and age of their doctrine. And Luther and Melancthon recognised not only the importance of dogmatic tradition, but manifested also the greatest reverence and caution in reference to ritual tradition. The importance which they attached to this is shown especially in their retaining and defending, in opposition to the Anabaptists, infant baptism, a custom which is certainly derived not chiefly from the Scriptures, but from Tradition. The same thing is shown by their continuing to observe the principal Christian festivals; for these, too, were the product of a continued tradition. In like manner they retained many portions of the liturgy and of the hymns of the Church, which had acquired a value for all Christians. Thus we see that, by their principles, Scripture and Tradition were not torn asunder, but only placed in their proper relation to each other. And even if it may be said that the Reformers, finding themselves entangled in a web of traditions,

in which true and false, Canonical and apocryphal elements were almost indissolubly mixed together, sometimes cut the knot instead of untying it, this proves nothing against the primacy of Scripture. For this rule cannot be annulled or altered so long as nothing can be put beside the Scriptures that is able to vindicate for itself the same degree of authority" (p. 34).

This lengthened extract is given because of the light it sheds on a point of divergence between the two great branches of the Reformation. It is justifiable to speak of the Protestant doctrine of the Rule of Faith as distinguished from that held by the Church of Rome, but it is necessary, at the same time, to qualify the general statement by a reference to the peculiar points on which the Lutherans and Anglicans differ from other Protestants on this great question. The foregoing extract is instructive in regard to the Lutheran doctrine, although it can hardly be considered as correct in its implicit account of the Reformed faith on the same subject.

Remarks on the Lutheran Position.

1. The Reformed theologians, as well as the Lutheran, held a positive attitude towards both dogmatic and ritual tradition. They were careful, as already stated, to show that they were not innovators in either doctrine or ritual. The doctrines of the three creeds specified by Dr. Martensen, if the

minute metaphysical statements of the Athanasian Creed and its anathemas be omitted, were held by the entire company of the representatives of the Reformed Theology. As his "Institutes" testify, Calvin's original object in that incomparable work was the defence of his persecuted brethren, especially in France, against the charges of heresy preferred against them. For this reason he took as the frame and outline of the work the Apostles' Creed, expounding and elaborating its brief propositions in the light of Scripture and antiquity. On the ground of the conformity of the doctrines thus established with the teaching of the Apostles and Prophets and the most trusted and renowned of the Fathers, he based his appeal to the King of the French in behalf of his maligned and persecuted fellow-Protestants. It cannot, therefore, be claimed that the Lutherans, as distinguished from the Reformed, alone adopted a positive, as distinguished from a negative attitude, toward *dogmatic* tradition.

2. Nor can it be said that the Reformed theologians were simply negative in their attitude toward *ritual* tradition. They held positively to the Sacrament of Infant Baptism and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. But they held to both, not because of the testimony of ecclesiastical tradition either in whole or in part, as Dr. Martensen alleges the Lutherans did in the instance of infant baptism, which he regards as "derived not chiefly from

Scripture, but from tradition." They retained both, and purged them both from the incrustations wherewith they had been corrupted and debased by Rome, and effected the purgation on the Apostolic principle of reforming abuses by reference to the original institution. This principle Christ acted on in dealing with the Jewish tradition regarding the institution of marriage, and upon it the Apostle Paul proceeded when reforming the Corinthian abuses connected with their observance of the Lord's Supper.

3. As Hagenbach's "History of Doctrine" (vol. ii. p. 218) shows, and as the history of the Reformation abundantly testifies, the Lutherans differed from the Reformed theologians in the application of this principle. "Entangled in a web of traditions, the Lutherans only sometimes cut the knot instead of untying it," while the Reformed always, in like circumstances, followed the example set by Alexander the Great in dealing with the Gordian puzzle. In other words, the Reformed did not hesitate to apply, in every instance of traditional perplexity, a principle which the Lutherans recognised, but only partially applied. For this partial application of a recognised principle, it is impossible to offer any vindication which is not subversive of the Protestant position as distinguished from that of Rome.

The Anglican Doctrine of the Rule of Faith.

Under the general head of the Protestant Rule of Faith, it is necessary to take note of a partial modification of the Protestant doctrine exhibited in the articles of the Church of England. That Church, in her sixth Article, says: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." However, after enumerating the canonical books of the Old Testament, said article adds, "The other books (as Hierome saith) the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet it doth not apply them to establish any doctrine." Then follows a list of the apocryphal books, ending with the second book of the Maccabees.

Besides this *quasi* recognition of the apocryphal books, as entitled to be read in the Church, where nothing but the word of God, prior to the departure of the Church from primitive custom, was read either for example of life or instruction of manners, the Church of England, in her twentieth Article, advances the claim that "the Church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in

matters of faith," and in her thirty-fourth Article teaches that "every particular or national church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish, ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying." These rites and ceremonies, moreover, though resting on the authority of man alone, may not be broken with impunity. Those who break them "ought to be rebuked openly, that others may learn not to do the like, as he that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and hurteth the authority of the magistrate, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren."

Strictures on the Anglican Doctrine.

1. There is here a manifest extension of the Rule of Faith beyond the canonical Scriptures, for although the apocryphal books may not be quoted to establish any doctrine, it is difficult to see how they may be read for example of life and instruction of manners without instilling principles for the regulation of life and the cultivation of manners; and this must imply the inculcation of doctrines enunciated or illustrated in these books.

2. The books enumerated, and enumerated without distinction or caution, contain foolish stories, and false doctrine, and examples of immoral conduct. The effect of placing such books side by side with

the canonical Scriptures in the public worship of God must, therefore, be to impress upon men examples of life, which, they may conclude, should be followed, although, as a matter of fact, the examples are, in many instances, such as should be avoided. Besides, the morality illustrated in some cases, as in the case of the deception practised on the father of Tobit by the angel, respecting his character and lineage, if taken as an "instruction in manners," must be subversive of all regard for truth, and produce a very low estimate in regard to angelic morals.

3. Under the claim of authority to ordain rites and ceremonies is embraced the right to institute ordinances such as "confirmation" and "consecration" of churches and other sacred places. This is a very different thing from claiming authority to arrange for the orderly and decent administration of a Divinely instituted ordinance. It is neither more nor less than claiming authority to ordain means of grace, and implies, on the part of the Church, authority to prescribe channels through which the sovereign grace of God shall flow to men. Protestantism, as exhibited in the Westminster Standards, recognises the right of the Church to arrange all matters of circumstance connected with the due and decent observance of ordinances instituted in the Divine word, but it sanctions nothing which cannot be shown to come under the head of neces-

sity, decency, and order, in the administration of a clearly revealed Scriptural institution.

4. The claim of authority to institute rites and ceremonies, as distinguished from the ordering of the circumstances connected with the observance of ordinances revealed in Scripture, necessarily involves the right of adding to the Rule of Faith, for it is a claim of authority to institute means of grace, which implies, on the part of those who advance it, a Divine warrant with accompanying promises of blessing to those who devoutly engage in the observance of such institutions. As no such warrant and no such promises are to be found in the extant Revelation, those who, by their instituting of such rites, assume their existence, are fairly chargeable with the grave offence of adding to the word of God.

5. It is further manifest that the claim of authority to ordain rites and ceremonies involves the claim of lordship over the consciences of men, for, as already shown, it is expressly ordained (Article XXXIV.) that "whosoever through his private judgment, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the traditions and ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly (that others may fear to do the like), as he that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and hurteth the authority of

the magistrate, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren." It is true there is here an apparently saving clause in the qualifying phrase "which be not repugnant to the word of God"; but the clause does not furnish a safeguard against the usurpation of dominion over conscience, as a thing "not repugnant to the word of God" is simply a matter of indifference, respecting which there is a clearly revealed rule of Scripture which precludes all attempts at discipline on the part of the Church. In all such matters the rule is, that every one must be persuaded in his own mind. This rule guarantees the right of private judgment, which the article in question condemns, and in doing so departs from the Protestant doctrine touching the Rule of Faith and substitutes the authority of the Church for the authority of the only Lord of conscience. A thing of indifference is a matter in regard to which Christ has not legislated, and, consequently, a matter in which He has left His people free: no man and no society of men, whether ecclesiastical or civil, may attempt to bind them. All such attempts, on whatsoever pretext, are simply a usurpation of the prerogatives of the sole King and Head of the Church. The powers of the Church are executive and not legislative, ministerial and not magisterial. The claim to institute rites and ceremonies and to discipline for the breach of them is a claim to legislate; and this

is all one with the claim of headship over Christ's Church, for a second lawgiver is a second source of authority having the right to demand submission to a second code of laws, and this is neither less nor more than a usurpation of the rights and prerogatives of Christ as Head of His mystical body the Church. The recognition of such claims is an act of disloyalty to Christ, and obedience to such laws is disobedience to the only Lawgiver who can save and who can destroy, while the obedience rendered lacks an essential element of piety, as it is not rendered out of regard to the revealed will of God.

LECTURE IV.

The Protestant Doctrine of the Rule of Faith (*continued*).

CLEARED of the foregoing Lutheran and Anglican modifications, the Protestant doctrine of the Rule of Faith embraces the following points:—

1. That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, to the exclusion of the apocryphal books and Tradition, contain all the extant word of God. 2. That they furnish the only infallible rule of faith and practice. 3. That the rule contained therein is complete, embracing all that man is to believe concerning God, and all the duty that God requires of man. 4. That these Scriptures are perspicuous, so plain that in the exercise of proper attention and diligence in the study of them, the will of God, in regard to all matters of faith and practice, may be infallibly ascertained. 5. As a corollary from the character and design of the Sacred Scriptures, Protestants hold that it is the duty of all who have access to them to study them faithfully, and decide on their testimony what God requires them to believe and do.

A Short Answer to Some Objections to the Protestant Doctrine of the Canon of Scripture urged by Romanists.

One of these objections which, Romanists allege, lie exclusively against the Protestant doctrine of the Canon, is that some books referred to in the Old Testament, and some epistles mentioned in the New, have been lost. This objection, if it has any force at all, is really fatal to the claims of Rome. Assuming this allegation regarding these lost books and epistles to be true, what follows? The inevitable conclusion is, either that these missing books and epistles were not intended to constitute a portion of the permanent sacred record, or that both the Old Testament Church and the New Testament Church have proved unfaithful to the trust reposed in them by the Author of the Revelation. On either horn of this dilemma the Romish objector must be hopelessly impaled. As he dare not accept the former without neutralising his objection, his only alternative is to acknowledge that under both dispensations the Church has proved unfaithful as the custodian of the sacred oracles.

This is a grave alternative for a Romanist, for the Church of Rome claims, in the face of facts, to have been entrusted with the whole Revelation as its Divinely appointed guardian and administratrix. But if such have been her relations to the

oracles of God, how has it come to pass that these books and epistles have been lost? She cannot absolve herself by throwing the blame upon her Old Testament predecessors in office, for our Saviour Himself has exonerated the Old Testament Church from the charge of faithlessness as the custodian of the Old Testament Scriptures, having simply preferred against her the charge which Protestants prefer against the Church of Rome—the charge of making void the word of God through her traditions. But who shall exonerate the Church of Rome from the charge, self-preferred, of letting slip from her custody whole books and epistles of that one Revelation of which she claims to have been constituted the sole guardian? If she has been the ordained stewardess of the mysteries of God, which she claims to have been, this confession is sufficient to prove that it is time she should give an account of her stewardship, for it is manifest, on her own showing, that she should be no longer stewardess.

As another proof of the defectiveness of the Protestant Canon, it has been urged by Romanists that the original of Matthew's Gospel, which the objector alleges was written in Hebrew, has been lost. To this objection, the answer given to its predecessor may be urged with equal force and pertinency. Assuming that Matthew's Gospel was, as the objector alleges, written in Hebrew, and that both the original and all copies of it have been lost,

who is to blame? Does the loss of the treasure not prove the inefficiency or the faithlessness of the treasurer? How is Rome to reconcile her claims to plenary endowment for the execution of her functions as the sole guardian of this sacred trust with the loss of these important documents? She has manifestly no alternative on her own showing but to submit to the charge of incapacity or unfaithfulness, and this is a grave alternative for an infallible custodian of the Rule of Faith.

As to this alleged loss of this alleged Hebrew gospel, suffice it to say that, if we are to credit Pope Sixtus V., there was no such document to lose. In his preface to his revision of the Latin Vulgate, this infallible revisionist accepts the rule laid down by Jerome, and endorsed by Augustine, for the settlement of questions arising from variation among manuscripts. His words are: "Sapienter B. Hieronymus in explanandis Sacris Scripturis Doctor maximus admonebat, ut quemadmodum in novo Testamento, si quando apud Latinos quæstio exoritur, et est inter exemplaria varietas, ad fontem Græci sermonis, quo novum Testamentum est Scriptum, recurri solet; ita si quando inter Græcos Latinosque diversitas est in veteri Testamento, tunc ad Hebraicam recurramus veritatem, ut quidquid de fonte proficiscitur, hoc quærimus in rivulis; quod etiam B. Augustinus iis, qui Scripturam tractant, inter alias regulas tradidit." Here then is the way in

which Jerome, Augustine, and Pope Sixtus V. would have settled the question regarding the accuracy of the translation of Matthew's Gospel. They would not have gone in search of an alleged Hebrew original, because they believed that the New Testament (the whole of it) was written in Greek. It is true Jerome once believed the theory of a Hebrew original of this gospel, but he afterward abandoned that opinion and accepted the theory that it was written in Greek—a theory endorsed, as the above quotation proves, by an infallible pope.

Scripture Doctrine of Inspiration.

Having discussed, under the head of the Romish rule of faith, the questions respecting the perfection and perspicuity of Scripture, the only question remaining for consideration is the infallibility of Scripture. To serve as a rule of faith and life the Scriptures must be infallible, and to be infallible they must be the word of God, and to be the word of God they must be Divinely inspired. We are thus brought face to face with one of the most important questions within the whole range of Theology, and which at present is absorbing more attention than any other, viz. the question of Inspiration. The foes as well as the friends of Christianity feel that this question is fundamental, and

the assailants as well as the defendants are acting in accordance with their convictions. The estimate on which both proceed is not a mistaken one. Faith is correlative to testimony, and saving faith is based upon the testimony of God Himself, and no book can serve as a foundation for faith which cannot furnish proof of its Divine origin. In a word, nothing can serve as a rule of faith, nothing can satisfy the conditions of the rise and progress of religion in the soul, except the very word of God. He is not a Christian who believes or obeys Matthew, or John, or Peter, or Paul. Our faith, and obedience, and love must terminate on God. No subjective affections which are destitute of this Godward reference can be considered religious. In all our religious experiences, in all our intercourse with the Bible, this principle is recognised: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. x. 17). It is God's word that faith hears, and it is to God that the believer gives ear. A man is born again, not by the corruptible seed of man's word, but by the incorruptible seed of the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever (1 Peter i. 23). The voice which makes a man's heart tremble in the reading of the law is not the voice of man, but the voice of God. The voice which waked the spiritually dead in Christ's day was the voice of the Son of God, and it is the same voice which wakes the spiritually dead now.

The word on which the soul rests when it accepts the invitations of the Gospel must, if the act be an act whereby the soul comes to God, be none other than the very word of God. The promises which a Christian man pleads at the mercy seat are always regarded by him as promises made by Him who cannot lie, promises to every syllable of which His truth and faithfulness are pledged. On this assumption all his wrestlings proceed, and on it all his pleas are founded. Prayer is God's remembrancer, and it is to uttered promises it points. Its language is: "Hast Thou not promised?" What errand has any sinner, or what right of approach, in prayer, if he has not as his warrant the Divine word pledged in the promises of God? In brief, the necessity of an infallible rule, a rule whose infallibility arises from the fact that it consists of the words of Him who cannot deceive, is laid in the very nature of religion in its rise and progress in the soul. All theories, therefore, whose tendency is to shake confidence in the doctrine that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, in which alone the Rule of Faith is found, are the word of God, must be injurious to vital godliness, and, where accepted in full consciousness of their legitimate consequences, must be, not only injurious to piety, but altogether subversive of faith.

Inspiration and Revelation.

Ruled by mere etymological considerations, some

have confounded Inspiration with Revelation. As θεόπνευστος means God-breathed, such writers have restricted the act expressed by that term to the communication of truth to the sacred writers, and have held that the Divine agency ceased with the communication of the message to the messenger, leaving him free in the delivery of it to others, whether orally or in writing. This argument from etymology, however, is not in harmony with the history of the Divine communications, and may be at once dismissed. It is not by mere etymology, but by the usage of terms as they are employed by standard writers, that their meaning is to be ascertained.

It is true that θεόπνευστος means God-breathed, but this fact does not warrant the conclusion that the final object of the inbreathing was the communication of information to the human agent. On the contrary, as all the communications recorded in the Sacred Scriptures were intended for the instruction of others besides the agents themselves, the most reasonable conclusion is that the inbreathing was designed to render the agents infallible mediums for the communication of the knowledge imparted to them to others ; and as this infallibility could be secured only by the continuance of the Divine agency until the message was delivered, either orally or in writing, it is certainly not too much to assume that it would not cease until this the final end was

attained. This assumption receives a very striking confirmation in the very passage in which θεόπνευστος occurs (2 Tim. iii. 16), for it is there employed as qualifying, not the sacred writers, but the sacred writing. This is worthy of special note, as a recent advocate of "the newer criticism," in attempting to overthrow the doctrine of Plenary Inspiration, has appealed to this passage as a proof that the record, and not the writers, was the subject of the θεοπνευστία. This concession, of course, implies all for which the advocates of Verbal Inspiration contend, for in conceding that the record was God-breathed, it concedes, by manifest implication, that the Divine afflatus reached the writing through the writers. An inspired record penned by uninspired penmen is, of course, an absolute impossibility.

This style of argumentation, and the confusion of thought underlying it, shows the importance of the comparatively modern distinction between Revelation and Inspiration. Dr. Chalmers very happily discriminates the two ideas by the antithetical terms influx and efflux, designating the process of Revelation by the former and the inspiring agency by the latter. In the influx the Divine communication was effectually borne in upon the mind of the sacred writer, and in the efflux the knowledge thus communicated was infallibly expressed to others, either orally or in writing. "By Revelation," says Dr. Lee,

"I understand a direct communication from God to man either of such knowledge as man could not of himself attain to, because its subject matter transcends human sagacity or human reason—such, for example, were the prophetical *announcements* of the future, and the peculiar doctrines of Christianity—or the communication of information which, although it might have been attained in the ordinary way, was not, in point of fact, from whatever cause, known to the person who received the Revelation. By Inspiration, on the other hand, I understand that actuating energy of the Holy Spirit in whatever degree or manner it may have been exercised, guided by which the human agents chosen by God have *officially* proclaimed His will by word of mouth, or have committed to writing the several portions of the Bible" ("Inspiration of Holy Scripture," Lect. I. p. 30).

In illustration of this distinction Dr. Lee refers to revelations received by the patriarchs, who, although favoured with such Divine communications, were not inspired to place them on record for the instruction of others, and cites the case of "the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, who," he says, "was inspired for his task, but we are not told that he ever enjoyed a revelation." Without endorsing this view of Luke's relation to what he wrote, or to the Divine communications made to the ministers of the word in Apostolic times, it serves well enough as an

illustration of the distinction in question. Revelation had to do with the subjective informing of the human agent, and Inspiration had to do with the actuating and energising of the agent in giving forth, in audible utterance or in writing, that which was made known to him by Revelation. The knowledge communicated to John in Patmos was imparted to him by Revelation; our knowledge of what John saw and heard has been communicated to us by Inspiration.

In his "Theopneustia," Gaussen very accurately marks this distinction. "This miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost," he says, "had not the sacred writers themselves for its object, for these were only His instruments, and were soon to pass away, but its objects were the holy books themselves, which were destined to reveal from age to age to the Church the counsels of God, and which were never to pass away." His idea is that if the writers themselves had been the object of the miraculous agency in question, the process would be properly designated a process of Revelation, whereas Inspiration has regard to the communication of truth to others through the medium of those who are themselves the subject of the inspiring agency.

Inspiration and Illumination.

And as Inspiration is to be distinguished from Revelation, so is it to be distinguished from that

illumination by which the Holy Spirit opens the eyes of the understanding to apprehend the truths of Revelation. The object aimed at in illumination is to make the subjects of it wise unto salvation, to impart unto them that knowledge of God, as He is revealed in Christ, which is, in its very nature, eternal life. From its very nature, therefore, illumination is limited to the people of God, as none but they have such apprehensions of truth, while men who were not themselves possessed of the saving knowledge of the truth have sometimes been made the vehicle of Revelation and inspired to communicate it to others.

Inspiration Extends to the Language Employed.

The term commonly employed by orthodox writers to indicate the fulness and perfection of the Divine agency in Inspiration is the epithet "plenary." As this term is now employed by those whose views of Inspiration are not altogether satisfactory, it is best to employ the term Verbal Inspiration, which properly understood expresses the doctrine of Scripture on this subject. By Verbal Inspiration is meant such an agency of the Holy Spirit as rendered the sacred writers absolutely infallible in the communication of the Divine will to men, determining not only the substance (which were all one with Revelation), but the form also of the message they

were commissioned to deliver, and extending, not simply to the ideas (which were Revelation again), but reaching to the words in which the Revelation was conveyed. As Gaussen admirably expresses it, "God Himself has not only put His seal to all these facts, and constituted Himself the Author of all these commands and the Revealer of all these truths, but further He has caused them to be given to His Church in the order, and in the measure, and in the terms which He has deemed most suitable to His heavenly purpose." Such is the doctrine of Inspiration which it is now proposed to establish, and in support of it the following arguments are submitted :—

1. In the first place, such agency as is implied in Verbal Inspiration seems to be demanded by the nature of the case. If God proposed to make a revelation of His will to men, He would doubtlessly employ all the means necessary to ensure the faithful and accurate communication of it. For this end, however, no means which left the language absolutely to man could be sufficient. There does not seem to be much room for argument here. The introduction of the agency of man was confessedly the introduction of an element of weakness and fallibility, which, if not overborne and controlled by the agency of the Divine and infallible, must issue in a fallible communication. The men employed might be honest, but honest men may err both in regard to their own apprehension of what they see and hear,

and in regard to the language they employ in communicating their impressions to others. If men with their passions and prejudices, men with their liability to misconception, men deficient in knowledge, and defective in memory, and prone to all the inaccuracy incident to the use of human language as a vehicle of thought, are introduced as the medium of communication, nothing short of an inspiration which extended to and determined the language employed, initiating, conducting, and completing the entire process, could possibly secure an infallible record.

2. Closely connected with this point is the argument from the connection which obtains between language and thought, between words and ideas, between the conceptions of the mind and the symbols by which the mind endeavours to give expression to them in communicating them to others. Thought intrinsically invests itself with an habiliment of language, and is never regarded as complete until it is expressed in words. Indeed, some go so far as to say that thought is never matured until it is expressed in writing. Without endorsing this opinion, this much may be said: that written language is the most perfect vehicle of thought. All that is necessary to the present argument, however, is the unquestionable fact that our ideas are inseparable from language. It has been well said that it is just as impossible for thoughts to come into tangible objective existence without language,

as it is for souls to be born without bodies. From this it must follow that an *ideal* inspiration, as distinguished from a *verbal* inspiration, is an utter impossibility. If the inspiration extended to the perfecting of the idea, it must have extended to the determination of the words without which the idea was still unformed and imperfect. Divine guidance within the former sphere can never be fairly separated from Divine guidance within the latter. The artist who simply furnishes the material of the future figure which is to express his own ideal and leaves the mould to be supplied by another not in possession of that ideal, would be acting exactly on the same principle as that advocated by the ideal inspirationists. To secure the result aimed at, the artist must go far beyond what the idealist regards as necessary. He must make a model representation of his conception, and from that model he must take a cast which constitutes the mould into which he pours the material of the future figure; or taking the model furnished out of plastic material as the standard ideal, he chips and chisels the marble or other material into the closest possible conformity to the ideal standard. As is the model, so will the mould or the future figure be. An imperfect model or an imperfect mould will produce an imperfect figure, and so far as its imperfection extends will it mar the original ideal. And so, and not otherwise, will the result be in the publication and exhibition

to men of the archetypes of truth which were hidden in the mind of God before all worlds. The accuracy of the representation, and the harmony of the doctrine revealed, with the Divine ideal, will be determined, ultimately, by the accuracy of the verbal mould into which the Revelation has been cast. In other words, the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration, of which some, who claim to be advanced thinkers, and who would have men believe that they speak in the interests of Christianity and Philosophy, speak with contempt, is, after all, the only doctrine in harmony with the laws which govern the relation of thought to language, or that furnishes a sufficient guarantee of the infallible accuracy of the Revelation transmitted to us in the Sacred Scriptures.

3. The necessity thus established was recognised by Christ. Although the Apostles had abundant opportunity during His earthly ministration of seeing His mighty works and hearing His discourses, He nevertheless did not regard them as qualified for the task of witnessing for Him without a very special influence from above. After telling them that they were His witnesses He immediately intimates their need of the gift of the Holy Ghost to qualify them for the work of witness-bearing. "Ye are," He says, "My witnesses of these things, and behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you ; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke xxiv. 48, 49).

Now surely if there were historical facts not requiring supernatural aid for their rehearsal, one might suppose that those of which the Apostles were commissioned to bear witness might be regarded as belonging to that class. The things of which they were to testify were things, one would think, they could never forget. They were things which had engraven themselves indelibly upon their minds. Could they ever forget the capture in Gethsemane, or the closing scene on Calvary, or the triumph of the resurrection of their Lord? These were the great burden of their testimony—how that Christ died for our sins and that He was raised for our justification. Yet these are the things for the publication of which the Saviour felt and avowed their need of preparation, and it was with reference to their equipment for testifying concerning these never-to-be-forgotten facts that He commands them to tarry in the city of Jerusalem. He sends them not forth immediately, but enjoins them to await the endowment from on high, to be communicated by the gift of the Holy Ghost. Is it not manifest from this injunction that He regarded it as indispensable to their qualification as witnesses even to historical facts enacted before their eyes—facts which must have branded themselves on their inmost souls—that they should not be left to the exercise of their natural powers of apprehension and memory in administering such a trust?

In conformity with this estimate of their capacity is the promise made by Christ in John xv. 26, 27: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me. And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning." This is a very remarkable promise. One would almost think that it was originally uttered, not simply for the sake of those immediately concerned, but with special reference to the theory that in matters of which the sacred writers had personal cognisance, there was no need of Inspiration, but simply of intelligence and fidelity.

Corresponding to the foregoing, and bearing still further upon the same point, are two passages in John xvi. 12, 13, and xvi. 26: "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak, and He will show you things to come.' And, if possible, still more conclusive is the language of the latter passage: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

Now consider the range of subjects of which

according to these two passages, the Holy Ghost was to inform the disciples of Christ. 1. All things of which Christ had Himself in person informed them already. 2. Things which He could not tell them just then because of their inability to bear them. 3. Things to come. 4. And, as if to cover everything which by any possibility might be construed as not embraced under these comprehensive categories, He was to guide them into all truth. To render His disciples infallible witness-bearers within all these spheres, our Saviour promised to send upon them the gift of the Holy Ghost. Is it not manifest that throughout the wide range of this all-comprehending classification of subjects, the absolute necessity of the agency of the Holy Ghost was recognised?

If it be said that the promise had reference to the revelation of these truths to the disciples themselves, and not to the communication of them to others, all that is necessary in reply is to refer to the language employed and the design of the endowment. The language of the passages now adduced proves beyond doubt that the Spirit was to be given in order to qualify the disciples as witnesses. For this purpose He was to "bring all things to their remembrance," etc., etc., and the end aimed at in the gift could not be regarded as attained when the reminiscence of an old fact or an old truth was recalled or a new one communicated. The recall or the fresh com-

munication was subordinate to the end of witness-bearing, and the agency by which the agent was informed for his task, we are warranted in concluding, would not cease to operate until the testimony was uttered, whether orally or in writing.

4. The argument from the promise itself is confirmed by the remarkable manner in which it was fulfilled. The disciples tarry at Jerusalem, according to their Master's injunction, and await the promise of the Father from the hand of their ascended Lord. What is the testimony of the fulfilment of that promise in regard to the extent of their inspiration? Was it an inspiration as to substance, or did it extend to the form and language of the message? "They were," we are told, "all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance," so that the heterogeneous assemblage of men out of every nation under heaven heard them speak, every man in his own tongue, the wonderful works of God. Here was certainly an influence vouchsafed which extended to words. It was, however, an influence which came down upon the disciples in fulfilment of the promised qualification. The outward symbols of the gifts bestowed bespeak an inspiration which extended to the language of the message they were to utter. Tongues are not mere symbols of ideas or thoughts. On the contrary, from their very nature, they indicate the medium whereby thought obtains expression.

Thus qualified, the Apostle Peter, who was certainly in a position to judge of the design of the miraculous endowment conferred upon him, entered upon the work to which he had been called and for which he soon gave evidence that he was qualified; and it will be observed that the things of which he bears witness belong to that class of things for the proclamation of which some allege he needed no supernatural guidance at all, or at most only a general superintendence.

5. This argument from the necessity of the case is greatly strengthened by a reference to the work to which the Apostles were called. To them was assigned the work of expounding the Gospel preached before to Abraham and the saints of the Old Testament, and of showing that all that was foreshadowed in the types, and signified in the symbols, of the ancient economies, had been fulfilled in Christ Jesus. Their natural unfitness for the accomplishment of such a mighty task is too palpably impressed in their history prior to the day of Pentecost to justify any lengthened proof. Let the case of Peter himself serve as an example. Of all the truths of the Old Testament Revelation, the most important was the expiation of sin by atonement through sacrificial blood. Yet this great truth, which lay at the very heart of the Mosaic economy, as it had at the heart of every preceding economy, had not been apprehended by Peter as one that was to have its true

expression and full significance in the atoning death of Christ. So little idea had he of the relation of all that sacrificial symbolism to Christ, that when Christ broached to His disciples the subject of His death, he began to rebuke Him, saying, "That be far from Thee." And what is true of Peter was true of them all. They had gross misconceptions regarding both the King and the kingdom they were to be commissioned to proclaim. Such men, untaught by the direct agency of the Holy Ghost, were utterly unfit to inaugurate the new dispensation; and left to themselves either in their conceptions of the rank, or the mission, of the Messiah, or in their attempts to instruct others in the mysteries of Redemption, they must have utterly failed to comprehend the Old Testament Revelation, or to communicate to men an authoritative and infallible account of the unsearchable riches of Christ.

6. Now if we turn from the consideration of the work as a task to be achieved to the contemplation of it as actually accomplished, we shall find ourselves in the presence of a problem defying all attempts at solution save on the assumption of an absolutely plenary verbal inspiration. These evangelists have succeeded in portraying the grandest character that has ever appeared on the stage of time. Speaking of this achievement, Prebendary Row, in his Bampton Lectures on "Christian Evidences viewed in relation to Modern Thought"

(second edition, p. 179), says: "It is the grandest character known to history. Not only have all the greatest and best of men bowed before it in humble adoration, but very many eminent unbelievers have confessed its greatness and perfection. Even those who deny its historical reality cannot help allowing that it is the grandest ideal creation of the human mind. Equally certain is it that whether the character be an ideal or an historical one, it has proved for eighteen centuries the mightiest influence for good which has been exerted on mankind. . . . Another fact, apparent on the surface of the Gospels, has a most important bearing on this question. Of this great character they present us with no formal delineation. Nothing is more common than for ordinary historians to furnish us with formal portraitures of the characters of the persons whose actions they narrate, and to render them the meed of praise or blame. All this is totally wanting in the pages of the Evangelists. Not one of them has attempted to depict the character of the Master. Yet so conspicuously does it stand forth in them that it is obvious to every reader, and produces a more distinct impression than the most elaborate delineation. The almost entire absence of praise or blame assigned to the different agents in the scenes which they depict is a most striking feature in the Evangelists. The absence of the expression of any personal feeling on the part of the writers seems

almost like coldness. They have not one word in commendation of the absolute self-sacrifice manifested in their Master's life, nor of His unwearied labours in doing good, nor of His benevolence, His holiness, or His humility, or any of the striking traits of His character. They must have viewed His death as the most atrocious of murders; yet not one word have they uttered for the purpose of heightening the effect of His cruel sufferings, or even of drawing our attention to His patient endurance."

Nor is this estimate of the work achieved by the Evangelists peculiar to Christian writers. The following passage from Rousseau, quoted by the Prebendary, speaks of it in the same strain of admiration. "The Gospel," he says, "has marks of truth so great, so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that the inventor of it would be more astonishing than the hero. If the life and death of Socrates are those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God." Mr. Wirt, the author of "The British Spy," refers to a very striking effect produced by the quotation of this last sentence in a sacramental address which he heard delivered by Mr. Waddell, the celebrated blind preacher of Western Virginia.

John Stuart Mill, in his essays on "Theism" (p. 252), puts the case with great force. "Who among the disciples of Jesus or among the proselytes

was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee; as certainly not St. Paul."

The question which Mr. Row, in considering these facts, thinks "urgently demands solution," is—"If a large portion of the Gospels consists of myths and legends, how has the delineation got into their pages?" This is in the connection in which it occurs in his lectures on the Evidences a most appropriate question, and admits of but one answer, viz. that apart from the actual enactment of the life and death they describe, the Evangelists had never produced the Gospel narratives. The facts adduced, however, warrant a larger conclusion than Mr. Row, as his lecture on Inspiration in the same book shows, will admit. The very doctrine of Verbal Inspiration, against which that lecture has been written, is the only one which will account for the wondrous achievement which has arrested the attention, and excited the astonishment, of friend and foe. The structure of the narratives, the self-abnegation of the writers, the utter repression of all feelings of revenge towards the murderers of their Lord, together with the absence of all remarks commendatory of His self-sacrificing love or condemnatory of the cruelty of His enemies, and the simple majesty of the style in which the unadorned facts are allowed to tell the story of the

Man of sorrows, bespeak an inspiration which took possession of every passion and power of the human agents, and extended, not only to the selection of the facts, but to the disposition of them, not only to the substance, but to the form and language in which it has been so felicitously expressed. On any other assumption than that of Verbal Inspiration, the sacred narratives of the four Evangelists present an unsolvable problem. It is difficult to conceive anything more unreasonable, or more at variance with the personal characteristics of the men, as manifested in their intercourse with one another and with their common Master, or with His estimate of them, as indicated in the rebukes He administered to their rivalry and self-assertion, and in the restrictions wherewith He accompanied their commission, and the provision vouchsafed for the execution of it, than to assume that to such men would be left the selection and arrangement of the materials, historical and doctrinal, through which the personal rank and character and work of the Son of God were to be revealed for the salvation of men. Theories, however plausible, which proceed upon such assumptions, if they do not originate in, must, if logically carried out, end in, defective views of man's fallen estate and of the remedy provided in the person and work of the Redeemer and the office work of the Holy Ghost. It is hardly credible that any one believing what the Scriptures declare respecting the unsearch-

ableness of the mystery that was hid in God, mysteries known only to the Son, who alone was commissioned to reveal them, mysteries which He was qualified to reveal by the unction of the Holy Ghost, who alone searcheth the deep things of God —it is hardly credible that any one believing all this and believing, at the same time, what the Scriptures declare respecting the native darkness and depravity of men in their fallen estate, could believe that such mysteries would be committed to any class of sinful men for utterance, or for record, under the guidance of a partial, and therefore imperfect, inspiration. This may by some be pronounced *à priori* reasoning, but it is reasoning whose premisses are furnished by the Scripture account of the ruin and recovery of men.

LECTURE V.

Inspiration of Christ.

BUT the argument drawn from the necessity of the case reaches its climax in the case of Christ Himself. To understand the full force of the argument furnished by the equipment of Christ for the office of prophecy, it is necessary to recur to the normal prediction respecting His rise recorded in Deuteronomy xviii. 15-19: "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put My words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him." This prophecy is rightly regarded as a Messianic prophecy, embracing all the typical prophets that

should arise in Israel prior to the actual advent of Him to whom Moses and all the prophets bare witness, and the doctrine the passage teaches is that in the execution of His prophetic office He would be God's Messenger and deliver the message to men as He received it from God. According to the promise here made, the words the Messianic Prophet was to use were to be words put in His mouth, and what He was to speak was to be what God should command Him.

Our warrant for the application of this promise to Christ, in its fullest sense, seems to be unquestionable. The application has been made by Christ Himself (John xii. 49, 50): "I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave me a commandment what I should say" (εἴπω) "and what I should speak" (λαλῶ). "And I know that His commandment is everlasting life. Whatsoever I speak" (λαλῶ) "therefore, even as the Father said" (εἴρηκέν) "unto Me, so I speak" (λαλῶ). In the same strain does our Saviour recognise His official subordination as a Prophet, and His dependence upon the Father, in that wondrous prayer (John xvii. 8), "I have given unto them the words" (τὰ ῥήματα) "which Thou hast given Me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me." It was on the ground of the original Deuteronomic promise that the Jews looked

for the rise of a particular Prophet distinguished pre-eminently above all others. Because of this expectation the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to question the Baptist respecting this among other things: whether he were that Prophet. John disclaimed all right to such prophetic honour, and informed them that he was simply the forerunner of Another, intimating, at the same time, the high rank of Him whom he was sent to introduce. The question put to John about *the* Prophet proves the prevalence of the expectation of a particular Prophet, an expectation that could have arisen in Israel only in consequence of the Deuteronomic prediction. When, therefore, our Lord appropriates and applies to Himself the language of that prediction, He must be regarded as claiming, and would be understood by the Jews as claiming, to be the Great Prophet whom the God of Israel had, through His servant Moses, promised to raise up. This identification, however, involves the conclusion that He, in His prophetic capacity, received the messages He delivered from God the Father, and that these messages were not given to Him for communication in a vague indefinite way, or (as the custom with some is to express it) "as to substance, but not as to form." In conformity with the original normal promise, the language in which He delivered the messages to men, was language taught Him of the Father.

But the Scriptures shed still greater light upon Christ's equipment for the execution of this Messianic function of prophecy. As one might infer from the very name Messiah, He was anointed for this office, and as the unction He received was the unction of the Holy Ghost, it must follow that for the execution of this function He needed the baptism of the Spirit. We are, however, not left to inference or conjecture in regard to this matter. It is expressly stated that the Spirit of the Lord was given Him for this very purpose. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the LORD hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound," etc. (Isa. lxi. 1, 2).

This passage our Lord applied to Himself in the synagogue at Nazareth, and thus put the reference beyond all possibility of doubt (Luke iv. 16-21). This appropriation of this prophecy not only identifies our Saviour with the appointed Herald of Israel's jubilee, but formally recognises, as one of the qualifications for the proclamation of it, the unction of the Holy Ghost. In harmony with the prediction, and with the recognition of its application to Himself, is the historic incident of the descent upon Him of the Holy Ghost, at His baptism by John. This baptism, as the narrative shows, was designed to prepare Him for the temptation in the

wilderness and for His public ministry. That ministry was not formally entered upon until He was Himself endued with power from on high.

This doctrine of dependence upon the presence and power of the Holy Ghost even in the case of Christ Himself is presented very prominently in the book of the Revelation. The title of the book is itself suggestive. It is entitled, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass" (Rev. i. 1). There is here official subordination, coupled with authoritative communication and commission. What our Lord is commissioned to communicate He receives from God the Father, and the definiteness of the revelation He is to make is symbolised by the term book (chap. v. 1). This latter term occurs more than once, and is manifestly used in a symbolical sense, and must be regarded as teaching that, as the Prophet ordained and commissioned to reveal the will of God to men, our Lord received a strictly defined system of truth. As the Son of God, whose native dwelling place is the bosom of the Father, He knew all that the Father knows, as He does all that the Father doeth, but the knowledge He came to communicate was not omniscience. He came to reveal the Divine purpose of mercy, to proclaim the way of salvation to be opened up by His own obedience and death. To the great themes embraced within this scheme

of grace were His prophetic functions limited. He was simply the mediatorial Agent appointed to make known a definite purpose of grace. This the book of the Revelation clearly establishes ; but this is not all it teaches in relation to this mysterious mission of our Lord. It teaches also that in communicating this definitely determined revelation, our Saviour was under the fullest possible inspiration of the Holy Ghost. This comes out very clearly in connection with the seven letters He commissions John to write to the seven churches in Asia. Although He is personally present with the aged Apostle, and is, in His own person, holding converse with him, He, nevertheless, ascribes what is recorded in the letters to the Holy Ghost. The ever-recurring admonition with which each letter closes is : "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Now surely if ever there were material out of which to frame an *à fortiori* argument, it is furnished in these unquestionable representations of the Sacred Scriptures respecting the dependence of the Θεάνθρωπος, as the Prophet of the Church, upon the special endowment of the Holy Ghost. If these passages warrant, as they unquestionably do, the conclusion that the eternal Logos, in His mediatorial prophetic capacity, was restricted, in His communications to the sons of men, to a predetermined Revelation confided to Him by the Father, restricted

to the words which the Father commanded Him to speak, so that He could say, as He did, that the words He had given to His disciples were words which the Father had given Him; and if, besides, these Scriptures teach, as they undoubtedly do, that the Holy Spirit was given Him to qualify Him for the delivery of the message of mercy which He brought from heaven to earth, and sustained towards Him relations of such intimacy in the communication that what He spoke, or placed on record, was really and truly the sayings of the Spirit Himself; if, let it be repeated again, these things be taught in the passages above cited, then surely it is most warrantable to conclude, with all the force and triumph of an *à fortiori* argument, that much more would weak, erring, fallible men, who formed the last links in the revealing medium, be placed under limitation as to the subject matter of their communications, and endued with such a measure of the Holy Ghost as would determine them in the choice of language which would infallibly convey the messages they were commissioned to communicate. Surely it were most unreasonable to hold that He who knows the Father even as the Father knoweth Him, should be placed under such official limitations and, at the same time, to hold that the Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists were left untrammelled by any restrictions whatever save what were imposed by honesty and fidelity; or to hold that while the Son of God, who

possesses all Divine attributes, needed, as the Prophet of the Church, in communicating to His people the will of God for their salvation, the unction of the Holy Ghost—an unction which, as has been shown, identified the Spirit with the utterance and record of the Revelation—and yet to hold that Peter, or James, or John, or Paul, was left free to make selections from what he had seen and heard, and utter them or record them in such form and in such terms as his own unaided genius might suggest! The facts and teaching of the Sacred Scriptures, reverence for the Divine Saviour and the anointing of the Holy Ghost wherewith He was qualified for His prophetic office, and regard for the salvation of men whose eternal interests are involved in the accuracy of the sacred record, forbid such limitation in the one case and such licence in the other.

Apostolic Estimate of the Inspiring Agency.

The conclusion thus reached is confirmed by the views which the sacred writers themselves held in regard to the extent of the spiritual influence under which they wrote, and by which they were moved to write. There occurs in the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians (chap. ii.) a remarkable testimony on this point. The Apostle is vindicating his method of preaching—a method which he had learned was not acceptable to some of the Corinthians, inasmuch as he did not adorn his discourses with philosophy

and rhetoric. As to the former of these alleged defects, he tells them that the subject matter of his preaching was not, as human philosophy, a thing of man's discovery, or the offspring of human speculation. The things he was commissioned to preach were things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, things which have not entered into the heart of man, things which none of the princes of this world knew, things which he designates as the wisdom of God in a mystery, and which were made known to himself by revelation. Regarding the second point, he informs the Church at Corinth that these Heaven-revealed mysteries were to be communicated to others through a Heaven-revealed medium. He gives them to understand that he was not at liberty to act the rhetorician in delivering these heavenly truths to men. The Spirit by whose revealing agency these truths were given to him was bestowed upon him, not simply to communicate to himself a knowledge of them for his own sake or his own personal salvation, but, in addition to all this, to secure the infallible communication of them to others. Hence human rhetoric was out of the question as the arbiter of the style of his discourses. He spoke these things, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, *i.e.* giving expression to the things of the Spirit in the words of the Spirit. Emphasising these two

points of his vindication, he adds, as a reason for both, that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, and affirms it as a truth that he cannot know them for lack of a discernment which the Spirit alone can impart. Such statements were, doubtless, very humbling to the Corinthians, as they are to men in all ages, who would reduce the matter of Revelation to the limitations of human Reason, and bring the utterance and the record of it under the rules and appliances of human literature. The bands of all such human imposed restrictions burst before the revealing, inspiring energy of the Holy Ghost, as did the green withes, wherewith Delilah thought she had bound him, from the limbs of Samson. The Apostle teaches, in this his vindication, that the mysteries which were hid in God were such as man could not discover by any powers he possesses; that these hidden mysteries could be brought forth from their concealment in the mind and counsel of the unsearchable Jehovah by none save the Spirit of God; that as the Spirit alone could reveal them to the sacred writers or preachers, none save the same Spirit could frame an infallible vehicle for the communication of them to others, and in confirmation of all this the Apostle winds up with an appeal to the known and clearly established doctrine of the spiritual blindness and inability of men in their natural estate. It is only by ignoring these express

testimonies of an inspired apostle that men can be led to call in question the doctrine of an inspiring agency of the Holy Spirit which extended to the form, and determined the language, of the sacred record.

Nor can it be said that the foregoing is an exceptional utterance of an exceptional claim. The passage itself is sufficient proof of this, for the claim advanced is a claim in regard to the entire ministry of the Apostle, embracing all the subject matter of his preaching and the language of his discourses But, besides, all that he claims here, he claims elsewhere. In correcting the abuses connected with the observance of the Lord's Supper, he informs these same Corinthians (1 Cor. xi. 23) that what he had delivered unto them he had himself received of the Lord Jesus. He advances a like claim for the entire Gospel which he preached to the Galatians. "I certify unto you that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. i. 11, 12). These passages, it is true, have special reference to the revelation of the Gospel to the mind of the Apostle himself, but they nevertheless constitute, indirectly, proofs of the doctrine of Inspiration established already, for it is certainly most unreasonable to hold that a supernatural agency would be employed to communicate the Gospel mysteries to Paul, and that, too, in his Apostolic capacity, and,

at the same time, to hold that such agency would be withheld when he was actually engaged in the execution of the task for which he was brought under the revealing agency of the Holy Ghost.

Nor can it be said that such claims are peculiar to one Apostle, or to one ambassador. The Apostle Peter takes the same ground, and advances the same claim on behalf of all the speakers on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 33). He refers what the people saw and heard on that day to the agency of the Holy Ghost as the gift of the Father and the Son. "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." In Acts iv. 8-12, this same Apostle, we are told, "filled with the Holy Ghost," preached before the Jewish council. Under a like plenary power of the Holy Ghost did the first Christian martyr deliver his memorable speech, which led to his martyrdom. The synod of Jerusalem (Acts xv.) lay claim to a like guidance of the Holy Ghost in their letter to the churches of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us."

The same claim is manifestly implied in those passages in which revelations made to the Prophets and Apostles of the New Testament are placed on a footing of equality with those made to the Prophets under the Old Testament. In his epistle to the

Ephesians (chap. iii.) the Apostle Paul refers to his writings in proof of his knowledge of the mystery of Christ, and adds that this mystery, in one of its aspects, "was not made known to the sons of men in other ages as it is now revealed to His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit," thus manifestly claiming for himself and his brethren coequal authority with the entire array of the Old Testament Prophets.

In accordance with this estimate, Paul instructs the Colossians (chap. iv. 16) to cause that the epistle which he had sent them should, after they had read it, be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans, and enjoins it upon them that they likewise read the epistle from Laodicea. It is difficult to avoid the inference that the Apostle, who gave such instructions to Christians at Colosse and Laodicea respecting the public reading of his own writings, must have regarded them as entitled to take rank with the sacred writings of the Old Testament, and must have considered himself entitled to take rank beside the Old Testament Prophets, for nothing was read in the assemblies of the people of God save the word of God. The Colossians and Laodiceans could put no other interpretation upon such instructions, and would never have complied with such injunctions had they not regarded the writings of Paul as of equal authority with those of Moses and the Prophets.

Nor was Paul's estimate of his own writings peculiar to himself. The testimony of Peter shows that such was the common estimate in which they were held by the churches, and by Peter himself. Peter, in his second epistle (chap. iii. 15, 16), speaks of Paul's epistles as well known, and quotes them as of equal authority with the other Scriptures, and teaches, incidentally, that the wresting of them or employment of them for the inculcation of false doctrine is a sin which may bring upon those who commit it destruction. This same Apostle, who thus highly exalts the Apostle Paul (by whom he had at one time been withstood to the face), has no hesitation in claiming for himself and the other Apostles coequal authority. In the second verse of this same chapter, he assigns as the reason of his writing this second epistle his desire to keep them "mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy Prophets, and of the commandment of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour." As the Prophets referred to were unquestionably the Prophets of the Old Testament, this passage advances for the words of the Apostles of the New Testament a claim to the reverence and sacredness with which those addressed were accustomed to regard the words of those holy men who under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit penned the Old Testament Scriptures. This view of the Apostle's language is confirmed, and great force added to the argument, by

the fact that he speaks of the "commandment" (ἐντολή) of the Apostles. The use of such a term in any connection in which the Church is called to obedience implies an authority which attaches to no word of man and which can be claimed for no human authority in the Church of Christ, whether ecclesiastical or civil; but in the connection in which it here occurs it is peculiarly significant, for while he speaks of the writings of the Old Testament prophets simply under the designation of words (ῥήματα), he applies to the utterances and writings of the Apostles the term commandment (ἐντολή), which is one of the strongest terms that could be employed to convey the idea of authority.

That the authority which, in the estimate of the Apostles, attached to their deliverances was above all that could be claimed for any doctrine or commandment of man, is placed beyond doubt by the penalties attached to any attempt at disobedience or opposition. To gainsay or reject their teaching was to incur an anathema (Gal. i. 8). To add to the words of the Apostle John, as given in the book of the Revelation, is to incur the infliction of the plagues that are written therein; and to take away from those words is to risk erasure from the book of life and forfeit heritage in the holy city (Rev. xxii. 19). To these writings all New Testament Prophets were to be subject, and by them their prophecies were to be tested. "If any man think

himself to be a Prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. xiv. 37). Such language, coming from men professing to act under a Divine commission, who are to be presumed to be aware of the natural import of their own words and of the meaning which would be attached to them by those whom they addressed, is certainly unjustifiable on any other assumption than that of an inspiration which rendered their words what they claim to be, the very word of God.

Now there is one consideration which renders the argument from the forth-putting of these claims by the sacred writers of the New Testament, absolutely conclusive, viz. the fact that the claims advanced were recognised and endorsed by God Himself. All these high claims were sustained and vindicated by signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost. These miraculous manifestations, vouchsafed in attestation of the Divine approval of the Apostles and their mission, must be regarded as nothing less than an authentication of their claims; and as these claims embraced the claim of an inspiration which extended to the language in which they delivered their messages to men, the conclusion is inevitable that the doctrine in question has the seal and sanction of God Himself.

This argument from miracles, however, is not to

be taken in isolation, as in and of itself conclusive in regard to the Divine authentication of the message, or the Divine authorisation of the professed messenger. The Scriptures put us upon our guard on this point, and admonish us that we should take cognisance of the character of the doctrine taught by the miracle-worker, as well as of the wonders he may work. Moses warns Israel against hasty inferences of a Divine commission, even from the fulfilment of dreams, or prophecies, accompanied by signs or wonders. The rule laid down was to test the commission of such prophet or dreamer of dreams by the existing Revelation. If he wrought wonders to induce them to go after other gods which they had not known, despite the wonder or the sign or the fulfilment, instead of giving heed to him, they were to put him to death (Deut. xiii. 15). To the same intent is the language in which the Apostle Paul warns the Galatians against false teachers who were trying to fascinate and withdraw them from the Gospel he had preached unto them. His language is most emphatic and solemn. "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed," etc. (Gal. i. 8). Of course the implication in such language is, that no miracle is to be regarded as, of itself, establishing the claims of a professed ambassador, even though he bore Apostolic or angelic credentials, whose doctrine

was not in accordance with the analogy of the faith. Both these tests of commission were recognised by Christ and His apostles, and to both our Saviour and His ambassadors make appeal. Our Lord makes appeal to the former when He says: "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin" (John xv. 24); and He recognises the legitimacy of the latter on all occasions on which He refers to Moses and the Prophets in proof of His mission and doctrine. In like manner the Apostles appear both as miracle-workers and as Old Testament exegetes, giving, as credentials of their Divine mission, signs and wonders, and demonstrating from Moses and the Prophets the harmony of their doctrines with what God had spoken at sundry times and in divers manners unto the fathers by the Prophets. They testified none other things than what Moses and the Prophets wrote, and they sustained their claims, as witnesses and ambassadors, by unquestionable tokens of the Divine presence and approval.

Inspiration of Mark and Luke.

As the foregoing arguments apply only to the writings of the Apostles, and do not, therefore, establish the inspiration of the writings of Mark and Luke, it is necessary to indicate the special line of argument by which the claims of the writings of

these evangelists to a place in the inspired record, may be vindicated. These arguments are as follows: 1. The writings in question, viz. the Gospel by Mark, the Gospel by Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles, ascribed to the latter, furnish most satisfactory internal evidence that their authors wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The character of the facts selected for record, the character of the doctrines represented as coming from Christ, and the unquestionable harmony of both facts and doctrine with the historical facts and doctrinal statements recorded by the other New Testament writers, satisfy all the demands and fulfil all the conditions of the most rigid rules of internal evidence.

2. The rank of the writers themselves. Both Mark and Luke were companions of the Apostles, and engaged in the work of the ministry. This argument is by some presented in a form which reduces these evangelists to the rank of Apostolic secretaries, or amanuenses, who merely recorded what they were instructed by their superiors to record, or, without such instruction, of their own motion made record of the Gospel discourses which they had heard, or of the historic incidents of which they were witnesses. According to this representation the Gospel written down by Mark may be regarded as the Gospel by Peter, and the Gospel which goes by the name of Luke should be designated the Gospel

by Paul. Others, again, represent the Gospel by Mark as an abridgment of the Gospel by Matthew. This is by no means a satisfactory view of the case. Had these writers sustained such relations to their respective writings as this theory assumes, there can be no reason assigned for the fact that these writings should bear their names, and should have been ascribed to them before the death of the Apostles and by the whole Church ever since. This consideration is greatly enforced by the fact that while the Apostle Paul employed an amanuensis in the writing of his epistles, his epistles were issued in his own name, and have never been ascribed to the mere penman he employed.

And as this theory of the authorship of these writings is unsatisfactory, so is it unnecessary. These Apostolic companions were something more than Apostolic secretaries. There is the most satisfactory proof that they occupied the rank of Prophets. The writer of the Acts of the Apostles associates himself with the Apostle Paul (chap. xvi. 13, 14), not as a secretary, but as a preacher, informing his readers that he took part as a speaker in the preaching of the Gospel to Lydia and others at Philippi. The language he employs in the record of that incident, places his prophetic rank beyond question. "On the Sabbath we went out of the city by a riverside, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down and spake unto the

women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." In this narration the writer has a prominence which bespeaks for him the status of a Prophet and puts him out of the category of a mere secretary, or a mere recorder of occurrences which happened to come under his notice, or to which his attention was called by his superior. By his use of the pronouns "we" and "us," he advances a claim to the authorship of the narrative which forbids the ascription of it to any other, and, at the same time, represents himself as an Apostolic associate in a work requiring as one of its conditions that the agent should be filled with the Holy Ghost.

Now the conclusions thus reached in regard to the status of Luke, are confirmed elsewhere as true respecting both Luke and Mark. At the close of the epistle to Philemon, the Apostle Paul sends salutations from several of his brethren, among whom he mentions Mark and Luke as his fellow-workers (*συνεργοί*). This same apostle makes a similar statement in regard to Mark (2 Tim. iv. 11), where he instructs Timothy to bring Mark with him, because he was profitable to him for the ministry. In the same connection he mentions Luke as the only one who was with him, at a time when he evidently felt the need of human sympathy, as he

had been forsaken by Demas and regarded the time of his martyrdom as close at hand.

It is unnecessary to refer to other instances of the mention of these two servants of the Lord Jesus. The passages already adduced are sufficient to prove that they were associated in the work of the ministry with the Apostle Paul, at a period in the history of the Church when supernatural endowments were both necessary and common. At that stage, when the New Testament Revelation was not complete or committed, as we have it, to writing, it was necessary to make provision for the edification of the churches founded by apostolic preaching, and the provision made, as the first epistle to the Corinthians especially shows, was to endow the common membership of the churches with an abundant baptism of the Holy Ghost, communicating to them, by Revelation, portions of Gospel truth, and qualifying them for the communication of these truths to others. (See 1 Cor. xii., xiii., and xiv.) If such endowments were common in the churches in the Apostolic period, surely it is not presumptuous to infer that men who are described by an Apostle as fellow-labourers or co-workers, or as helpful to him for the ministry, would be partakers of them. And if they needed these supernatural gifts to qualify them for delivering, orally, discourses which would pass away with the occasion of their utterance, much more did they need them to fit them for placing on

permanent record the Gospel narratives which bear their names, which were to serve as fountains of saving knowledge in all ages of the Church's history, or, as in the case of the Acts of the Apostles, to sketch the history of the founding of the Christian Church so as to furnish instruction throughout all time in regard to those principles which lie at the foundation of church organisation and missionary enterprise. These conclusions are not reached through constrained inference from inadequate premises. They are in harmony with the facts presented in the writings in question, which bespeak their Divine original ; in harmony with the method of the Divine administration at the time of their composition ; in harmony with Apostolic testimony regarding the writers themselves, and in harmony with the testimony of the Church from time immemorial, as they are in keeping with the instinctive estimate of God's people as they study their precious contents.

LECTURE VI.

Inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

NEXT in order comes the question of Inspiration as it relates to the Scriptures of the Old Testament. If the arguments already advanced in regard to the inspiration of the New Testament be valid, the way should now be well opened for the establishment of the inspiration of the Old, and our task comparatively easy.

Taking advantage, then, of the foregoing arguments, it is claimed that the arguments advanced in establishing the inspiration of the New Testament have, by implication, and, indeed, by no very remote consequence, established the inspiration of the Old Testament. In fact, if the inspiration of the New be acknowledged, the inspiration of the Old cannot possibly be denied. If we recognise the infallible authority of Him who is the Truth, as well as the Way and the Life, the faithful and true Witness, who has the seven spirits of God, upon whom the Holy Ghost descended in person and took up with Him His permanent abode to qualify Him for the func-

tions of His prophetic office, and if, in addition, we recognise what has been already abundantly proved, viz. the full, plenary inspiration of the Apostles and Evangelists of the new dispensation, we must acknowledge that the Old Testament Scriptures are inspired, not only as to substance, but also as to form and language, for both Christ and His apostles testify that these sacred writings are, in both respects, the word of God.

The Testimony of Christ.

1. In His Sermon on the Mount, when formally entering upon His public ministry, He bears a testimony to the imperishable character of the Law and the Prophets, which would seem to admit of no interpretation short of an inspiration which extended to the letter of the record. "Think not," He says, "that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. v. 17, 18). In Luke xvi. 17, He bears a similar testimony: "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one tittle of the Law to fail." It is impossible to find language capable of conveying a higher estimate of the imperishable character of the Sacred Scripture as a written record. The jot (or ἰῶτα, or *yod*) is the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet, and the tittle (or horn,

κεραία), is simply a stroke, or part of a stroke, whereby letters bearing a close resemblance (as כ and ב) are distinguished from each other. It may seem a very narrow-minded species of Biblical criticism or exegesis which bases an argument upon a literal interpretation of our Lord's language in these passages; but an example showing the consequence of a change even of a very trivial nature, in one of the strokes of one of the letters of a Hebrew word, will serve as a vindication of both the criticism and the exegesis. The verb הָלַל means to praise, and the verb חָלַל means to profane, and yet the only difference in the characters by which these two widely diverse ideas are expressed is that by which ה is distinguished from ח, viz. a break, or interruption in the left limb of the ה. Let the simple change be made in the letter ה of filling up this breach, in, for example, the sentence הַלְלוּ־יָהּ, "Praise ye the Lord," and the sentence would be transmuted into a most irreverent and blasphemous command to profane the Lord.

2. Equally express and decisive is the language of Christ in vindication of Himself against the charge of blasphemy preferred against Him by the Jews (John x. 33-36). "Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods? If He called them gods to whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken" (λυθῆναι), "say ye of

Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?" Now the question here is not whether our Saviour's argument were cogent or pertinent. This is to be assumed if His personal rank be admitted. The sole question is, What, according to the language employed by Him, was His estimate of the Old Testament Scripture? It will be observed that He does not single out the passage on which He bases His argument, and testify of it that it is unbreakable, making its infallibility depend upon His own authority. Stated formally, His argument is as follows :—

Major—The Scripture cannot be broken.

Minor—I said ye are gods, is written in your law, which is Scripture.

Conclusion—"I said ye are gods," cannot be broken. Such is unquestionably our Saviour's argument, and it assumes and affirms the unbreakableness and infallibility of all that was recognised by the Jews of His day as Scripture—the infallibility of the entire Jewish Bible; for He argues the infallibility of the clause on which He founds His argument, from the infallibility of the record in which it occurs. According to His infallible estimate, it was sufficient proof of the infallibility of any sentence, or clause of a sentence, or phrase of a clause, to show that it constituted a portion of what the Jews called (ἡ γραφή) the Scripture. In

this argument our Lord ignores and, by implication, invalidates all the distinctions of the later Rabbis, and their followers among modern Biblical critics, in regard to diversity of degrees of Inspiration among different books of Scripture. Instead of arguing, as Maimonides and his followers would have done, the infallibility of the clause from the fact that it is written in the Law, that is in the Pentateuch, which these critics regard as peculiarly and exceptionally inspired, He argues the infallibility of the Law itself and the clause embraced in it, from the infallibility of the Scripture, of which the Law was but a part. According to our Saviour's teaching, therefore, the entire set of writings designated Scripture by the Jews, was infallibly inspired.

As regards His views touching the extent of this inspiration this passage is equally explicit and conclusive. His argument turns upon the fact that the passage quoted by Him (Ps. lxxxii. 6) contains the clause "I said ye are gods," and as the force of this reference depends upon the fact that this clause contains the word "gods," it is manifest that His argument depends ultimately upon the fact that the original writer (Exod. xxii. 9 and 28) employed this term. His argument, therefore, proceeds upon the declared infallibility of the entire Scripture even to its minutest clause and its individual terms.

Testimony of the Apostles.

1. In his second epistle to Timothy (chap. iii. 16) the Apostle Paul bases the claim he advances, on behalf of the ἱερὰ γράμματα, known to Timothy from childhood, as being able to make wise unto salvation, upon their inspiration, for having made this affirmation respecting the Holy Scriptures, he immediately adds, as a reason for it, that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, etc. It is true that critics differ in regard to the interpretation of this passage, some adopting the Socinian interpretation, which embraces θεόπνευστος in the subject, and makes ὠφέλιμος the sole predicate. Those who take this view translate as follows: "All" (or every) "Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable," etc., instead of "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable," etc. This rendering of the passage, it is respectfully submitted, is not in keeping with the scope of the Apostle's argument. It would be exceedingly strange if, after representing the Holy Scriptures as able to make wise unto salvation, he should, in the very next sentence, proceed, by a vague statement, to insinuate doubts respecting some of these very writings, not indicating what portions he took exception to, and, therefore, leaving not only Timothy, but the entire Church in all time, to determine what portions were, and what portions were not, θεόπνευστος and

ὠφέλιμος. As the Greek admits of the rendering given in the Authorised Version, as well as the rendering proposed by the critics referred to, we are bound by that rule of exegesis which takes into account the scope of the context to accept that rendering and regard the passage as an Apostolic testimony to the inspiration of all Scripture, or of every Scripture. This testimony, as has been already shown, when speaking of the import of the term θεόπνευστος, is simply a declaration that the entire Old Testament, in every part thereof, was God-breathed ; and as this declaration has reference to the Old Testament as a *writing*, the doctrine it teaches is, that those Holy Scriptures, which Timothy had known from his childhood, were God-breathed. No other view can be entertained, for it cannot be for a moment imagined that, after passing such high eulogium upon the Holy Scriptures which Timothy, and his mother, and grandmother, had held in such veneration, the Apostle would at once proceed to inculcate an indefinite theory of inspiration, which, from its indefiniteness, could serve no other end than to perplex those who would attempt to apply it, and must, in the end, lead to sceptical views on the whole subject of the claims of the sacred record.

2. A like testimony is borne by this same apostle in his epistle to the Galatians (chap. iii. 16) : "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made.

He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to Thy seed, which is Christ." Here the argument is made to turn not only on a clause or a single word, but on the difference between the singular and the plural of a noun. The whole force, and validity, and warrantableness of the argument, is based on the fact, that the writer in Genesis used seed (זֶרַע), and not seeds (זְרָעִים). Had he used the latter, the Apostle would not, even where the point under discussion was the Messianic claims of Jesus of Nazareth, have deduced from it an argument in the affirmative. Canon Farrar has assailed this argument from this passage, on the assumption that it was impossible for Paul, who was a good Hebraist and, at the same time, a master of Hellenistic Greek, to have argued in such a manner, inasmuch as the plural of זֶרַע is never used for human offspring, but only for different kinds of grain, which, he alleges, is also true of the Greek usage of the plural of *σπέρμα*.

On this attempt to invalidate the argument from this classic passage in this controversy, three remarks may be allowed : (1) That if the Apostle Paul were the good Hebraist and the master of Hellenistic Greek, which Canon Farrar says he was, we must take him, and not Canon Farrar, as an authority in regard to the usages of these two languages. This seems to be not an unreasonable assumption, and is fairly deducible from Canon Farrar's own testimony

respecting the Apostle's acquirements in these tongues. If, however, this be allowed, the dispute is settled, for the Apostle proceeds upon the assumption that both languages admitted of this use of these terms. (2) It may be observed, in the next place, that it is impossible to give to the plural of σπέρμα, as used by Paul in this passage, the meaning which Canon Farrar says is the only admissible one. This is a point very easily settled. All that is necessary to determine it is simply to translate the passage, giving to σπέρματα the meaning of "seeds of grain." "He saith not, And to different kinds of grain, as of many, but as of one, And to thy grain, which is Christ"! In a word, Canon Farrar wishes to determine Paul's usage by his own theory of Inspiration, instead of allowing Paul's actual use of language to determine his views on that subject. In ascertaining the usage of terms, we must consult writers of acknowledged authority in the language we have under consideration. Proceeding on this principle, the only one recognised by scholars, or at all reconcilable with common-sense, we must, Canon Farrar himself being witness, accept that of the Apostle Paul. On turning to his epistle to the Galatians, as we have seen, we find that he uses the word in dispute in a sense which Canon Farrar alleges is a violation of the usage of the two languages involved in the controversy, languages of which the good Canon has already pronounced him a master! If Paul was a

good Hebraist and a master of Hellenistic Greek, it is impossible that he could have been guilty of such a departure from Hebrew and Hellenistic Greek usage as Canon Farrar's interpretation of the passage in question involves. (3) It is not unworthy of note that the usage which Canon Farrar repudiates as not Hebraic, has found a place in the Talmud. When a witness against one charged with a capital offence appeared before the Sanhedrin, the president admonished him, as the Talmudists inform us, that if through his false witness-bearing the accused should be put to death, the *blood* not only of the accused, but the *bloods* of all his seeds which, had he lived, should have sprung from him, would be required at his hands. The instance given in confirmation by the Talmudists is worthy of special remark, because of its resemblance to the Apostle's form of argument. The case cited is that of Cain, where God says: "The voice of thy brother's blood hath cried to Me from the ground." The comment on these words is: "He saith not קוֹל דַּם אָחִיךָ, the voice of thy brother's *blood*, but קוֹל דְּמֵי אָחִיךָ, the voice of thy brother's *bloods*"—teaching that Cain was guilty, not simply of the murder of his brother Abel, but זַרְעוֹתָיו of his *seeds* which should have sprung from him, had he not been slain by the hand of his murderer. Of course, it may be urged in reply that the Talmudists are not to be taken as authorities where a question of Hebrew usage is to

be decided; but in this case we have, not simply the Talmudists, but a Hebraist of acknowledged authority in his own mother tongue, certifying, by his own practice, to a Hebrew usage in which he has been sustained by rabbinical testimony. Where we have such evidence on the one side and nothing on the other, save two assumptions, viz. that the Hebrew language does not recognise such usage, and that so good a Hebraist as the Apostle Paul could not have been guilty of assuming the existence of such usage—assumptions directly contradicted by the fact that the Apostle testifies to the usage denied, and the additional fact that the passage cannot be read at all if the suggested usage be accepted—where we have these facts to appeal to, we need have little hesitation in rejecting Canon Farrar's criticism of the argument deduced from this classic passage in support of the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration.

3. Nor was Paul singular in his estimate of the Old Testament Scriptures as the very word of God given by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The Apostle Peter is equally emphatic in testifying to their Divine origin and character. In his first epistle (chap. i. 10-12) he leaves no room for doubt on this subject. Speaking, as the Apostles were accustomed to do, of the relation of the New Testament Revelation to that of the Old, he says: "Of which salvation the Prophets have inquired and

searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, which things the angels desire to look into" (παρακύψαι). The points embraced in this testimony, in so far as it bears upon the question under discussion, are—(1) That the Revelation recorded in the Old Testament was made by the same Spirit who inspired the Apostles under the New; that Christ by His Spirit is the Author of both revelations. (2) That the Old Testament is not as clear as the New; and that that ancient Revelation was so obscure that the Prophets themselves, through whom it was communicated, did not fully understand it, even though they searched and inquired diligently. (3) That the Author of it declined to inform them fully, in response to their solicitation, in regard to the mysteries they were commissioned to put on record for New Testament times. (4) That in reporting these Old Testament mysteries to men under the new dispensation, the Apostles required a special unction of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. (5) That these mysteries are so deep that

they are sufficient not only to engage, but to tax to their utmost, the minds of angels.

These points are plainly embraced in this remarkable passage ; and they are sufficient to prove that, in the estimate of this Apostle, the Old Testament Revelation was above the mind of man to conceive, or fully to understand, or adequately and infallibly to express. According to this testimony, all that the Prophets undertook, or were commissioned, to communicate, respecting this salvation, they received through the Revelation of the Spirit of Christ which was in them, and what they were placing on record they did not fully understand and were not given to know. So difficult were their themes that even when "the fulness of times" had come, the men who had companied with Him, who is the subject matter of all these prophetic forecasts, apart from the special baptism of the Holy Ghost, were not qualified to preach them to others, and, as if to give special emphasis to his estimate of the magnitude of these mysteries, the Apostle appeals to the fact that they are sufficient to engross and tax the minds of angels.

The bearing of all this upon the question of the extent of the inspiration of the Old Testament writers is obvious. If such were the difficulties under which these writers attempted to transmit to New Testament times the mysteries revealed to them, it must be manifest that they required an

inspiration that determined the form and the language of the record. This will be seen at once if we take, as an example, the prophecy recorded Isaiah liii. Here the task assigned the prophet was to give a sketch of the person and work of the Messiah, more than seven hundred years before His advent. He is to sketch His appearance, to speak of the estimate in which He would be held by Israel, the treatment He would receive at their hands, the nature and design of His sufferings and the hand the Father would have in the infliction of them, and the reward the august Sufferer should receive when His work would be accomplished. This task Isaiah executed, as we all know, in such a way that the chapter in which the record of it is found reads as a piece of New Testament history. How, it may be asked, could Isaiah have written that fifty-third chapter of his prophecies if he had (were that possible apart from language) received simply the substance of the communication? If we are to accept the testimony of Peter, Isaiah inquired and searched diligently what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in him did "signify when it testified of *these* sufferings of the Messiah and the glory that should follow," and was informed that the knowledge he sought was held in reserve for others—for those to whom he was commissioned to transmit these wondrous mysteries. Under such circumstances, writing under all the disadvantages

of a felt imperfect knowledge of the themes he was treating, the prophet must have failed had the inspiring Spirit not taken charge of the efflux as well as of the influx of the Revelation. The opposite theory of an inspiration as to substance, but not as to form, would involve a task for the prophet as difficult as would be the task of an artist who was called upon to execute a statue portraying the personal appearance of a man whom he had never seen, and from whom all knowledge of his visage and bearing was of set purpose withheld, and whose sole provision for the work was a block of marble, the substance of the future figure. It is not too much to say that under such circumstances the statue would fail of execution, nor is it too much to claim that under like prophetic provision Isaiah had never penned his immortal Messianic portraiture.

4. In his second epistle (chap. i. 16-21) this same apostle bears one of the strongest testimonies to the complete and all-pervading inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures to be found within the compass of the New Testament Revelation. There is not room for more than an enumeration of the points it embraces. These are as follow: (1) That the testimony borne by the Apostle and his brethren to the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ was the testimony of eyewitnesses of His majesty when His glory was revealed in His transfiguration and attested by a voice from the excellent glory. (2)

That the word of the Old Testament record was more sure (*βεβαιότερον*) even than that audible utterance which proceeded from the excellent glory of the manifested presence of God. (3) That the reason of this greater surety was to be found in the fact that no prophecy of the Scripture (the written record) was of private interpretation or of the prophet's reading of his own subjective estates, but, on the contrary, was the offspring of the Holy Ghost working in the prophet, moving, bearing him along as a ship is borne along (*φερόμενος*), and thus determining him to speak, and determining his speech. (4) That this agency reached not simply to the oral utterances of the Prophets, but extended to the word of prophecy placed by them on record, for the Apostle's testimony is borne to the surety of the prophecy of *Scripture, i.e.* to the prophecy as a written record.

There can, therefore, be no doubt respecting the estimate of the Old Testament Scriptures entertained by Christ and His Apostles. It is manifest from their references to them, of which the foregoing are but specimens, that they looked upon them as the very word of God. They always appeal to it as the ultimate arbiter. Our Saviour, as well as His Apostles, cites Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, as witnesses to His Messiahship. He upbraids His disciples for their foolishness and slowness of heart in not believing all that the Prophets

had spoken, and then "beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the *Scriptures*" (the written word) "the things concerning Himself" (Luke xxiv. 27). It is to the written record He makes His appeal. "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me" (Luke xxiv. 44, 45); and then, for the purpose of enhancing our estimate of these Scriptures, it is added: "Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the *Scriptures*"—a statement which certainly, if duly weighed, proves that those same Scriptures required the special agency of the Holy Ghost to enable the sacred writers to place them on record, for if apart from supernatural agency men cannot understand them when written, surely without such agency men could not have been able to write them. It must be held as an unquestionable canon that what men cannot understand, men cannot write. Indeed, we have here again the premises of an *à fortiori*, for if man cannot understand what is written, *much more* could he not have written it. Such is Christ's estimate of the writings of Moses and the Prophets, and of the evidence of their Divine origin, that He places their testimony above the testimony of one risen from the dead. "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead" (Luke xvi. 31). The very manner of

His reference to the Old Testament Scriptures is inconsistent with any other theory than that of an inspiration which extended to the words. In quoting Psalm cx. in proof of His own rank, He represents David in it as speaking by the Holy Ghost, and bases His argument from it upon the fact, that David had employed the term, "my Lord," in speaking of the Messiah.

After the same manner do the Apostles quote the Old Testament. In describing the closing scene, they represent the solemn incidents as fulfilling the Scripture to the very letter. Thus the Saviour's cry, "I thirst," and the incident which followed are spoken of as fulfilling the Scripture (compare John xix. 28, 29, 30, with Psalm lxix. 21). The action of the soldiers in refraining from breaking His legs, while they had broken the legs of those who were crucified with Him, is represented as fulfilling that Scripture (Exod. xii. 46): "Not a bone of Him shall be broken." In like manner the parting of His garments, the casting of lots upon His vesture, His betrayal by Judas, His association with the thieves in His death, and the exceeding bitter cry "Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani," are all represented by the New Testament writers as designed fulfilments of the Old Testament Scriptures.

In a word, the Old Testament is so quoted as to leave no doubt that our Saviour and His apostles regarded it as the very word of God, every jot and

tittle of which must be fulfilled. With them it was all one to use the expression "The Scripture saith," or "Moses saith," or "David saith," or "Isaiah saith," as to say: "The Holy Ghost saith" or "The Lord saith." What impression can such language produce save what it has produced on the minds of both Jews and Gentiles, with the exception of those who have given heed to a proud, self-sufficient criticism which substitutes its own canons and conclusions for the testimony of the Scriptures themselves respecting the relation of the sacred writers to the inspiring Spirit?

If we put all these facts together, we have an argument for the Plenary, Verbal Inspiration of the Old Testament, which is fitted, so far as moral evidence can be, to produce conviction where the mind has not been warped by Rationalistic or quasi-Rationalistic theories. The character of the men, the character of the doctrines they inculcate, the claims they put forth as the accredited mouthpiece of the Holy Spirit, the harmony of their doctrinal teachings as parts of one system, although they were born in different ages and trained under vast diversities of circumstances, the full and unqualified recognition of their highest claims by Christ and His Apostles, who ever treat their writings as sacred, and pronounce their words to be the very words of the Holy Ghost—if these facts, which are absolutely unquestionable, do not prove that the Old

Testament Scriptures have been given, not only as to substance, but as to form and language, then we may despair of proving any of the doctrines of the analogy of the faith by adducing in support of them the testimony of the Scriptures themselves. There is only one way of meeting the argument based on these facts, and that is to prove that Christ Himself was not what He claimed to be, and that His Apostles were not competent judges or trustworthy witnesses. As there can be no reasonable doubt regarding the estimate in which the Messiah and His ambassadors held the writings of Moses and the Prophets, the only ground on which an opponent can take his stand is the anti-Christian ground, that Jesus of Nazareth was not the promised Messiah, and that His Apostles are not competent authorities in the settlement of critical questions.

Objections to the Doctrine of a Plenary, Verbal Inspiration.

Having established from the testimony of Christ and His Apostles the Scripture doctrine of Inspiration, we are now in a position to estimate aright and to answer objections.

1. The first objection is certainly a very grave one. It is simply a protest against any theory or doctrine at all in regard either to the nature or the extent of Inspiration. This very common objection

is thus stated by Dr. Charteris in his very valuable work on "The New Testament Scriptures—their Claims, History, and Authority." After showing very satisfactorily that the Scriptures themselves claim the attributes of "truth, unity, and authority," Dr. Charteris adds (Lect. ii. p. 35), "*That while the Scriptures claim to be the word of God, given by inspiration of His Spirit, they do not enable us to ascertain the nature or the extent of Inspiration.*" As the author puts this statement in italics, we must regard it as expressing his decided conviction, and as embodying, in his estimation, an important critical conclusion. In support of this position Dr. Charteris gives us a criticism on one of the passages usually cited in proof of the doctrine of Plenary, Verbal Inspiration (2 Tim. iii. 16), the result of which is that as the meaning of the passage "centres in the Greek adjective translated 'given by inspiration of God' or 'inspired of God,'" and as the meaning of that word is not explained either in the passage itself or elsewhere in Scripture, as he thinks, it does not furnish a basis for a theory of inspiration.

With all respect to this excellent author, and with the most cordial approval and high estimate of the work referred to, neither the position he lays down, nor the reasons he advances in its support, can be accepted. It does not follow because a word is not, immediately on its use, defined by the writer who

uses it, that its meaning is either obscure or uncertain. The meaning of a word is to be learned from its root signification and from its history. Proceeding upon this canon of interpretation, we need have no hesitation in forming an opinion regarding the meaning of this Greek adjective (θεόπνευστος), on which the doctrine of this classic passage depends, and on whose import our esteemed author is afraid to give any definite judgment. θεόπνευστος, judged by its etymology, beyond all question means God-breathed, or Divinely inspired, and when applied to a record, as it is here, can have no other meaning than this: that the γραφὴ θεόπνευστος is, as a γρᾰφή, the offspring of the Divine operation expressed by this mystic term. Such is the conclusion to which the etymology points; and this conclusion is sustained and confirmed by the scope of the Apostle's testimony to the claims of the Holy Scriptures of which he is speaking, and by the use and wont of other writers. There can be no doubt that such was the idea attached to this word and its equivalents as used by ancient writers, nor can there be any reason given for attaching to it any other meaning when used by an Apostle in an epistle written to one accustomed to speak Greek, as Timothy was. If we do not hold by this principle in the exegesis of the Sacred Scriptures, we shall drift into exegetical Agnosticism, and must hesitate to speak dogmatically respecting the meaning of

terms in which are enshrined the central truths of Christianity, such as priest, sacrifice, justification, etc. There is no more ground for taking up the position the author has taken in regard to Inspiration than there is for taking up the same position in regard to justification, or regeneration, or priesthood, or atonement. If we are to have no doctrine on the subject in question, it may very readily, on the same principle, and for the same reasons, be shown that "we are under no necessity to have some theory" in regard to these other subjects. An objector to the formation of a definite dogmatic conception of regeneration might subject the classic passage (John iii. 3-5) to a similar criticism as that to which Dr. Charteris has subjected 2 Timothy iii. 16, alleging that the Greek word translated "born again" has a meaning which we "cannot realise," and covers a "knowledge too high for us," and that "it is a lock, not a key." There would, indeed, seem to be special considerations in favour of the application of such critical principles to this particular passage, as our Saviour invests the subject, even in His explanation, with an atmosphere of mystery, telling Nicodemus that the agency of the Spirit in this marvellous change is like that of the wind that bloweth where it listeth, whose sound one heareth, but whose source or destination he cannot know.

It is true the author does not profess to base his conclusion exclusively on the ground that this

mysterious word (*θεόπνευστος*) is not explained in the passage in which it occurs, and that he takes the ground that it is not explained by "other Scriptures." This latter position, however, it is respectfully submitted, he has failed to establish. What he says in this connection (pp. 36-41) is quite conclusive as against the advocates of the theory of different degrees of Inspiration, and the anti-dogmatic dogmatism of Matthew Arnold, and what may be called the Christo-centric theory of Inspiration, which undertakes to judge of the importance or the authority of any portion of Scripture by the amount of insight it evinces into the essence of Christianity, and thus assumes the ability of the reader, or at least of the critic, to judge, *à priori*, what it is which constitutes the essence of Christianity. While successfully assailing these theories of Inspiration, however, the author has advanced nothing warranting the conclusion that the term *θεόπνευστος* is not explained "in other Scriptures."

His task involved all the difficulty peculiar to the task of proving a negative, and would require an examination of all the passages of Scripture which have any bearing upon the elucidation of its import, and certainly of all those passages on which the advocates of a Plenary, Verbal Inspiration rely. As our author has not attempted this investigation, it must be concluded that he has not furnished the premises necessary to the vindication of his con-

clusion, that the Scriptures "do not enable us to ascertain the nature or the extent of Inspiration."

As it is much easier to criticise than to construct, it is but fair to ask what position Dr. Charteris himself holds in regard to the relation of the Sacred Scriptures to the agency of the inspiring Spirit. His book professedly rejects the doctrine of a Verbal Inspiration, the doctrine of different degrees of Inspiration, the doctrine of the Christo-centric theorists, the doctrine that the Scriptures are wholly Divine without any human element, and the doctrine that they are wholly human without any element of the Divine, and concludes that the human and the Divine are so combined and blended that "we cannot redd the marches" between the human and the Divine in Holy Scripture, adding, as an index to his view, "*θεῖα πάντα καὶ ἀνθρώπινα πάντα*" (Lect. ii. p. 50).

It is very difficult to see the *πῶν στῶ* of our esteemed author. He has, of course, to encounter in this matter the difficulty which besets the anti-dogmatists (of whom he is certainly not one), as he starts with the assumption that the Scriptures "do not enable us to ascertain the nature or the extent of Inspiration," and, proceeding upon this principle, cannot venture to advance any theory on the subject, save the negative theory that there is no theory deducible from Scripture. But it has occurred in this experiment as it must ever occur where one

attempts, on anti-dogmatic principles, to treat of the teaching of Scripture on any subject. Our author winds up on p. 50, as has been already shown, with what, if it means anything, must be regarded as a theory that the Scriptures are "all human and all Divine." If they are all human and all Divine, the only conclusion, if we are to ascribe to their language any Divine authority, is that the Holy Ghost so actuated, and controlled, and energised the human agent that the resultant utterance, or resultant record, as the case might be, was a Divine, and not a human, record, or a record in human speech or language, whose terms were determined by the inspiration of the indwelling Spirit. This is so obvious a conclusion that Dr. Charteris, in commenting (p. 47) on our Saviour's promise to send the Comforter (John xvi. 13) to enable His disciples to understand His life and teachings and to guide them into all the truth, says that "if this were true, the Apostles were more than ordinary historians." Not satisfied with this testimony, he goes still further, and adds: "They were inspired men, speaking of what they had been supernaturally enabled to understand and declare." This is all that the most rigid verbalist could ask. It ascribes both the Revelation and the Inspiration to the Holy Ghost, giving to the Spirit as thorough an agency in the efflux as in the influx of the truth communicated. The *declaration* of the truth by

the Apostles, if we are to accept our author's account of the matter, was as truly supernatural as the revelation of it to their understandings. This, however, is simply the doctrine our author has rejected, for it is impossible to discriminate *a supernatural declaration* from a statement supernaturally determined, not simply in substance (for that had been already achieved in the process of Revelation), but in *form*, which embraces the structure and language of the announcement.

The foregoing may suffice to show the difficulty of recognising, as Dr. Charteris does, the fact that "something higher than ordinary honesty and accuracy must be ascribed to the writers of Scripture if their writings are to be accepted at all," and yet refusing to recognise an agency of the Holy Spirit which extended to the determination of the language of the utterance, or the record, of the message they were commissioned to deliver. The "*something*" whereby the sacred writers were raised above mere honesty and accuracy, if we are to judge of it by Dr. Charteris's own account of its origin and extent, was a supernatural influence which, so far as the *Revelation* was concerned, imparted to them an understanding of spiritual things beyond all human capacity ; if so, may it not be fairly concluded that this same supernatural influence, which our author confesses extended to the declaration as well as to the Revelation, imparted to them a power to utter,

or to record, these spiritual things in a manner above all that the human mind in the exercise of its natural powers can achieve? If the uttering or the recording was as much above the natural capacity of the human agent as the Revelation was (and this seems to be conceded when it is acknowledged that both were supernatural), surely the result must have been as completely Divine in the one case as in the other. But if the resultant utterance, or record, was as truly Divine as the Revelation (which is certainly implied in the concession that it was equally supernatural), there could have been no room left for the mistakes, and errors, and discrepancies wherewith some modern critics credit the sacred text. There is no argument against the perfection of the record which does not lie with equal force against the perfection of the Revelation. If a supernaturally endowed writer may, notwithstanding his endowment, produce an imperfect record, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that a supernaturally endowed seer may, notwithstanding a like endowment, fail to catch the import of the heavenly vision. There can be no reason for modifying the Divine agency by the imperfection of the human agent, in the one case, that will not warrant a like modification in the other. The Christian apologist cannot surrender the outwork of the Inspiration without betraying the citadel of the Revelation.

LECTURE VII.

Some Objections arising from Misapprehensions.

THIS opposition to the framing of a theory of Inspiration seems to originate in a twofold misapprehension of what is meant by that expression. (1) It assumes that the advocates of the verbal theory undertake to define the mode in which the inspiring Spirit operates on the mind of the agent He employs, and how it is that He determines the speaker or the writer in the selection of the language in which the resultant utterance, or record, is expressed. This assumption is entirely groundless. They do not profess to have any theory regarding these mysterious operations. In these inscrutable movements of the Holy Ghost, as in all instances of the Divine activities, the mode is unsearchable, and the nature of the action past finding out. We cannot know how God does anything, and cannot tell how He either "reveals" or "inspires." It does not follow, however, from our ignorance of the mode of the Divine action, that we are shut out from having any theory in regard to its revealed results; we know not how God created the heavens and the earth, or how He new-

creates a soul dead in trespasses and sins; but we are nevertheless warranted in believing that, in both cases, the work is entirely His. If we are to accept the express testimony of Scripture, we cannot but believe that the creative agency did not cease with the creation of matter, but that, on the contrary, it continued in the ordering of the starry array, the production of earth's fauna and flora, and extended to the fitting up of our world as a suitable habitation for moral intelligences. In like manner, and for like revealed reasons, we believe that the result of the action of the Holy Spirit in the new birth is the impartation of life, and that the agency of the Spirit does not terminate when the soul is quickened into spiritual life, but that, on the contrary, it is continued in the maintenance of the life imparted.

The reason of this our belief is, that the Scriptures teach that God does not abandon His work in either case, but continues to foster and cherish it until He has attained the ends which, in His infinite wisdom, He has seen fit to propose. Nor is it otherwise in the case under consideration. He does not begin the work and cease before He has achieved the end. He does not take the first step toward the communication of His will to men by an infallible revelation of that will to His holy Prophets and Apostles, and then so modify His subsequent action on the minds He had thus supplied with His own imperishable truth as to leave it optional

with His ambassadors in what terms they would deliver a message which had been borne in upon their understandings with all the unequivocal tokens of a Divine authentication. The Scriptures know nothing of an atheistic evolution in the works of God, and they know nothing of such an evolution in His word. His agency does not end with furnishing the material or substance of the future universe, leaving the form and details to be wrought out by the forces of nature, nor does it end with furnishing to His servants the substance of the future Revelation, leaving them to mould and fashion it as they themselves may list.

This is a matter expressly revealed, and must be held by us if we would avoid the sin of questioning the truth of the Divine testimony; for we are informed by the Apostle Peter that "no prophecy of the *Scripture* is of any private interpretation," and the reason assigned settles the question regarding the measure of choice left to the Prophet in making the record, for the Apostle adds: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter i. 21). This is a testimony respecting the authorship of the recorded prophecy; and the doctrine it teaches is that the record was determined, not by the will of man, but by the Holy Ghost. (2) A like misapprehension prevails in regard to the import of the term Verbal Inspiration. By

the opponents of the theory, it is very commonly understood to teach that the Holy Spirit dictated to the inspired speaker or writer the words he was to employ. This is an idea entertained by no intelligent advocate of the doctrine in the present day. There is no doubt that *Revelation* has been made by dictation, and in diverse other modes, as when God spake to Adam, and Noah, and Abraham, and Moses, and as He did from Mount Sinai to the whole congregation of Israel. The nearest approach to *Inspiration* by dictation is furnished in the instance of the commission to write given to the seer of Patmos. He is not only told to write, but he is told what to write to the seven churches in Asia. This, however, is, strictly speaking, not *Inspiration*, but *Revelation*. There is no evidence that the Apostle's writing kept pace, *pari passu*, with the Divine dictation. As he informs us himself (chap. i. 2), he "bare witness of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of whatsoever things he saw"; but there is nothing to warrant the inference that, in the presence of his august Lord, whose matchless glory filled him with such awe, and while the wondrous visions wherewith he was favoured were enacting, he occupied himself in writing.

An incident recorded in the tenth chapter may be taken as an index to the order that obtained between the Revelation and the writing. The Apostle tells us that when the seven thunders uttered their voices,

he was about to write (ἤμελλον γράφειν), but was commanded to seal what they had spoken, and was forbidden to write their utterances. This incident seems to teach that the dictation, which was simply a process of Revelation, was over before the Apostle proceeded to write what had been thus revealed.

But however close the connection, however near to the instantaneous may have been the sequence, the dictation belonged to the process of Revelation, and not to that of Inspiration, and those passages which speak of dictation, whether from Sinai, or in Patmos, or face to face with God's servants anywhere, cannot be adduced as proofs of Inspiration by an external audible utterance. When all that dictation can effect is done, there still remains room for misapprehension and consequent misstatement if the human agent be left to himself in giving expression to the communication made orally to himself by the Divine utterance, however explicit, or however clear.

The doctrine of Verbal Inspiration hypothecates no such theory of the Spirit's agency in the utterance or the record of what the Prophet, or Apostle, or Evangelist, was commissioned to communicate. All the theory assumes is, that the agency of the Spirit in the transaction extended to the form and language in which the human agent made known to others what he had received from God. How the Spirit effected and secured this result is inscrutable, as all God's personal acts are inscrutable to all finite

intelligences, whether human or angelic. The unsearchableness of the mode, however, must not lead us to gainsay the result, when that result has been affirmed and authenticated by the testimony of the Prophets and Apostles with all the explicitness with which any doctrine or fact can be expressed. "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall He not know?" and He that is the Author of man's being, the Father of our spirits, shall He not have power to determine man's thoughts, and mould and fashion man's speech? The denial of the feasibility of the process assumed in the theory of Verbal Inspiration, seems to imply most inadequate conceptions of the relation of the Author of our nature to our intellectual and moral faculties. Surely it is not too much to hold that He who gave to man all the powers of thought and speech which mark him out as destined for the contemplation of Divine things, and for fellowship with his Creator, must be able, by avenues of access and modes of approach and intercourse of which we can take no cognisance, to enter into the citadel of the soul, and determine its inner activities, and mould its thoughts into such forms of speech as shall express with absolute exactitude the mystery of the Divine will. In taking this ground the advocate of Verbal Inspiration cannot be charged with presumption, or be regarded as treading upon

forbidden ground, or as prophesying inconsistently with the analogy of the faith. On the contrary, those who deny the doctrine of an inspiration which extended to the form and language of the Scripture record must, if consistent, reject some of the most important and precious truths of the economy of grace. Reference has been made already to the doctrine of Regeneration to illustrate the truth of the position that the inscrutableness of the mode of the Divine acts cannot be regarded as an argument against the fact or the result of the Divine action. This doctrine may also serve to illustrate the feasibility of all that the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration demands at the hands of the Divine agency. That doctrine, as has been already shown, teaches that God, in the regenerating act, imparts spiritual life to a dead soul, and initiates a change in which all the man's thoughts of God and sin, together with all his feelings and volitions in regard to both, are completely revolutionised. Is there anything in the doctrine for which verbal inspirationists contend, out of analogy with this great fundamental doctrine of the Bible? Or, to put the question as the advocates of the doctrine are entitled to put it, can any one challenge that doctrine without challenging principles that lie at the very foundation of the primary doctrine of an applied redemption? These remarks may serve in some measure to remove misconceptions of the doctrine in question, and to

show that its advocates have not espoused a theory which does violence to the laws of thought or sets at defiance the principles which govern human language. Let it be clearly understood that Verbal Inspiration neither teaches nor involves the doctrine of verbal dictation, and that it assumes no principle in regard to the Divine agency, in its action on the soul of man, which is not in harmony with the analogy of the faith.

(3) Closely allied to this misconception of Verbal Inspiration is that entertained by such opponents of the doctrine as Coleridge, who speaks of it in terms of almost unmeasured ridicule and contempt, as unworthy of a moment's entertainment by any person of intelligence. In his estimation, the doctrine is absolutely incredible, and worthy to be classed with the legends of monks and rabbis. In his "Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit" (pp. 98, 99) he thus delivers his estimate :—"All the miracles which the legends of monk or rabbi contain, can scarcely be put in competition, on the score of complication, inexplicableness, the absence of all intelligible use or purpose, and of circuitous self-frustration, with those that must be assumed by the maintainers of this doctrine, in order to give effect to the series of miracles, by which all the nominal composers of the Hebrew nation before the time of Ezra, of whom there are any remains, were successively transformed into *automaton* compositors—so

that the original text should be in sentiment, image, word, syntax, and composition an exact impression of the divine copy!"

Had Coleridge been better acquainted with the doctrine he has denounced in these terms of contemptuous scorn, he had, doubtless, written in a very different strain. It is only on the assumption that the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration reduces the sacred writers to the rank of mere *automata* that such language can be justified. The theory here denounced proceeds upon no such assumption. As has been well said in reply to this charge, "the sacred writers were not '*pens*,' but '*penmen*.'"

The Holy Spirit selected for His infinitely wise and gracious purpose intelligent moral agents, and used them, as such, in producing what we have in the Bible, a faithful, infallible record of the Divine will, a record upon every word of which we can rely as a word determined by the agency of the Spirit and the best that could have been selected to give expression to the thoughts of God.

The vindication of the theory against this misconception of it has been already given in replying to that misconception of it which represents it as implying, on the part of the inspiring Spirit, a process of dictation. The Holy Spirit, in employing the human agent, did not deal with him as if he were a piece of mechanism constructed out of dead, dull, insensate, unspiritual, unintelligent matter. The

agent was selected because he possessed qualities the opposite of all these—qualities which fitted him to be the medium of communicating spiritual truths to intelligent moral agents like himself. Having chosen him for this reason, the Spirit did not employ him in such a way as to ignore, or hold in abeyance, the qualities on the ground of which He had chosen him. On the contrary, He brought into requisition every power whose exercise was necessary to the apprehension of the Revelation, and the communication of it to men.

The only point to be considered here is whether this could be effected without reducing the agent employed to the rank of what Coleridge calls an *automaton*, or what other opponents of the verbal theory designate a *machine*. As already intimated, this point has been settled over and over again in the preceding discussion. If the Holy Spirit can regenerate the soul when it is dead in trespasses and sins, and so act upon the understanding as to change its views of sin and holiness, and upon the Feelings and Conative powers, as to produce repentance, faith, and new obedience, inspiring love to God and a determination to live for His glory—if the Spirit of God's grace can do all this without reducing men to the rank of machines, or *automata*, the subjects of this mighty transforming power not only feeling free throughout the entire process, but realising in it an emancipation from the triple bondage of

Satan, sin, and death, surely it cannot be regarded as unreasonable to hold that this same Spirit, acting upon the same powers of the human mind, can, without destroying the freedom of the agent or reducing him to an automaton, determine his choice of language in giving expression to the truths He had imparted to him by Revelation. He who can determine a volition, which certainly involves an act of preferring or choosing in regard to the various objects contemplated by the human mind, can certainly determine a volition in regard to that particular class of objects embraced under the head of language ; and if He can effect a choice without destroying the freedom of the agent in the one case, there is no rational ground for questioning His ability to do it in the other. In a word, there is no objection that can be urged against the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration on the score of its inconsistency with the freedom of the moral intelligences employed by the Holy Spirit, which will not be found to lie with equal force against the doctrine of Regeneration and Conversion. In fact, it will be found that objections of this class usually arise either from misconceptions of the doctrine itself, or from very imperfect views of the nature of free agency, or from most inadequate conceptions of the Spirit's agency in applying the redemption purchased by Christ. All such objections are, in principle, answered when the Pelagian and semi-

Pelagian objections to the Augustinian doctrine of sin and grace have been met.

(4) A similar objection to the two preceding has been founded on the diversity of styles to be found in the sacred writings. If Inspiration extended to the words, it is alleged that there neither would, nor could, be any diversity in composition proceeding from the one inspiring Spirit. This is simply the former objection in other terms, and rests on precisely similar grounds, and is to be met in the same way. It rests, ultimately, on the same Pelagian or semi-Pelagian foundation, whether its advocates are conscious of its bearings or not. Anti-Calvinists allege that if the man be passive in regeneration, he must be acted upon as a mere machine and not moved to act as a free moral agent. To this objection Calvinists reply that the regenerating act of the Holy Spirit reaches to all the powers of the soul. That action does not lead the man to act as under the irrational force of a blind impulse. It is an action whereby the understanding is enlightened and the will renewed, and the result is not simply a holy act to which the man is constrained, but the implantation or creation of a holy *habitus* which is the basis and active principle of a holy activity. The activities of the regenerate man are free acts, and their freeness arises from the absolutely thorough efficaciousness of the agency of the Spirit in effecting the change by which the new activities have

been originated. The regenerate man, although he has come under a power whose analogue is that put forth in the creation of light, and in the resurrection of the dead, is throughout moved and actuated as a free agent, and is utterly unconscious of any co-action either from without or from within.

But besides, and as bearing directly upon the objection now under consideration, this marvellous change does not obliterate those personal peculiarities by which the individual is distinguished from others. Christians, though dwelt in and actuated, in the Divine life, by one and the selfsame Spirit, who worketh in them both to will and to do of His own good pleasure, retain their individual personal characteristics. This is the law of the Divine administration of the kingdom of grace, and we have no reason to expect that the administration will proceed upon different principles in the kingdom of glory. The distinctive characteristics of God's people will, doubtless, abide even when the goal of absolute conformity to the image of the Firstborn shall have been reached in the estate of glorification. The effect of the complete and perfect sanctification of the entire mystical body of Christ will not involve the annihilation of the individuality of the members of which it is composed.

In like manner, Calvinists contend that the work of the Spirit in Inspiration may be perfect, reaching to every power of the individual requisite to the task

and yet the individual peculiarities of the writer remain as marked as if no such influence were put forth upon him. Indeed, there is philosophic warrant, as well as Scriptural authority, for going much farther, and claiming that the more thoroughly appropriating and efficacious the work of the Spirit in taking possession of, and actuating, the human agent, the more thoroughly must the resultant record be characterised by the individual peculiarities by which he was personally distinguished. The action of the one and the selfsame Spirit gives no warrant for the inference of unity of style on which the objection is based. No one expects such unity of result where the same musician performs upon a variety of musical instruments. A piano can be made to give forth sounds exactly like a harp, but this result can be obtained only by the introduction of a contrivance which interferes with the constitution of the instrument. That is, absolute uniformity and conformity in the musical result from two different kinds of instruments is not obtained by the operation of one and the selfsame musician, but by a process of modification which interferes with the native structure of the instruments from which the music is evoked. And so it must be in the case under consideration. Uniformity and conformity of literary style from different writers could be obtained by no species of influence which did not interfere with, and modify, and suppress, or hold in abeyance, the individual characteris-

tics of the human agents. The more thoroughly the individual writer was taken possession of by the inspiring Spirit, the more thoroughly would his personal characteristics be revealed in the resultant record ; while the objection assumes that the more thorough the actuating agency of the Spirit, the more thoroughly must these personal characteristics be neutralised and set at nought. The objection, therefore, if tested by laws which govern the operations of the human mind, must be set aside as utterly unphilosophic.

Dr. Hill in his " Lectures on Divinity " urges this objection with great confidence. " There are," he says, " peculiarities of expression and a marked manner by which a person of taste and discernment may clearly distinguish the writings of every one from those of every other. But had all written uniformly under the same inspiration of suggestion, there could not have been a difference of manner corresponding to the difference of character, and the expression used by all might have been expected to be the best possible. These circumstances," Dr. Hill adds, " lead us to abandon the notion that the Apostles wrote under a continual inspiration of suggestion." (Book II. chap. i.).

It will be seen, at once, that this objection, as stated by Dr. Hill, lies with equal force against his own theory of a Partial Inspiration, rising occasionally to a full Plenary Inspiration of suggestion. If

the fact that one sacred writer writes in a marked manner, using peculiar expressions by which his writings may be distinguished from those of every other, proves that the Apostles did not always write under a continual inspiration of suggestion, it is equally valid against Dr. Hill's doctrine that the Apostles sometimes wrote under this species of influence, for the sacred writers invariably write in a marked and characteristic manner. If it be inconsistent with the doctrine of a Verbal Inspiration to admit that the sacred writers impress upon their compositions their own individual literary characteristics, it must also be inconsistent with the theory of an occasional Inspiration of suggestion, for every sacred writer writes like himself. John writes like John, Paul like Paul, James like James, and Peter like Peter, from beginning to end of their writings. On the theory that the inspiration of suggestion obliterates all personal literary characteristics, it is manifest that in no instance can it be claimed that the Apostle wrote under this spiritual influence. This, of course, is all one with saying that the sacred writings furnish no *data* for Dr. Hill's theory. The theory which denies that the sacred writers wrote under an afflatus of the Spirit, determining the language they employed, when they wrote like themselves, must, if carried out, end in the denial of Verbal Inspiration altogether.

But one of the most objectionable features of this

objection is that it assumes that the Holy Spirit must be restricted to one style. What authority, it may be asked, is there for this assumption? Is it a deduction from His style of working in external nature? Are the flowers wherewith He decks the mead all of one pattern and hue? Or is it not a fact that He so works that no two individuals, even of the same species, whether within the domain of earth's *fauna* or *flora*, can be found exactly alike? Will our objectors carry out the principle of the objection here, and found an argument upon the diversity of style and variety of form against the unity or plenitude of the agency? There is one style of workmanship in the violet, another in the rose, another in the vine, another in the oak, another in the hyssop, and yet all these worketh the one and the selfsame Spirit. When He wishes to produce a particular result He fashions a particular organism. He never holds Himself bound, even within the limits of the same species, to observe an absolutely uniform rule; and when He willed to furnish His Church with poetry He created and qualified, by His providence and grace, the sweet singer of Israel and his fellow-psalmists, whose songs have been wafted down through the centuries, and have almost enabled the Church militant to antedate the rapturous anthems of the Church triumphant. And when He wished to furnish her with the mighty arguments and logical *formulæ* which form the

greater part of the theological material of the New Testament Revelation, He raised up, and trained in Tarsus and at the feet of Gamaliel, the future Apostle of the Gentiles. His instruments were not selected *ex post facto*, but were framed and fashioned and cultured out of a predeterminate purpose, which extended to everything requisite to their equipment for the specific end He had in view. Having thus prepared the instrument for the specific work, He employed it in pursuance of His antecedent purpose. He did not ignore the peculiarities which in His providence He had produced, and which it was throughout His purpose to employ. On the contrary, having created and fitted the instrument for the achievement of the end determined, He consecrated it and set it apart to the sacred use on which His mind was set from the beginning. By doing this, however, and doing it thoroughly, He produced what we have in the Sacred Scriptures, diversity of style, proceeding from the one infallible unique source—the one inspiring Spirit.

5. Very much akin to the preceding is the objection based on variety of narration. It is alleged that if the Spirit inspired all the narrators to the same extent, there could be no variety whatever in the narratives of the same events or discourses. The statement of this objection would seem to be all that is necessary to the refutation of it. The

objection would have some force if it rested upon a variation which amounted to a contradiction, or the introduction of something which, as a matter of fact, was untrue ; but a variety of narration involving no contradiction among the narrators, and introducing nothing untrue, furnishes no ground for the conclusion that the variations could not have proceeded from the common authorship of the one and the selfsame Spirit. In order to frame an objection out of such variations in narratives of the same events, or of the same discourses, as we have in the Holy Scriptures, it is necessary to assume that it was the design of the inspiring Spirit to present each event simply and solely in one particular aspect. There is, of course, no warrant for such assumption in the analogy either of external nature or Revelation. What reason can be assigned for the limitation of the Holy Spirit to such uniformity of narration? If He saw fit to edify His Church by diversity of representation, and in His providence arranged that Matthew should have observed what he narrates and that John should have observed a different phase of the same incident, and described it accordingly, what objection can there be to His doing so? Does the work of recalling to their minds all that they had seen or heard imply that He must recall to the mind of each all that the others had heard, or seen, just as the others had heard and seen, and not as each had heard and seen

for himself individually? If there was variety in the original cognition—and that, too, a Spirit-designed variety—should we not rather conclude from the very nature and design of the work to which, *as witnesses*, the writers were called, that there would be a like variation in the Heaven-revealed and Spirit-inspired reminiscence? The only restriction implied in the nature or the design of the work which the Spirit called them to execute, is the restriction imposed by fidelity to truth. The Holy Spirit cannot be represented as accepting and recalling, for communication to the Church, an erroneous impression made on the minds of His servants by what they had seen, or heard.

The impugners of Verbal Inspiration appeal, in support of this objection, with all the exultation of conscious victory, to the variation manifested in the several accounts given by the Evangelists of the inscription placed by Pilate over the Saviour upon the cross. This variation they regard as the *experimentum crucis* of the Verbal Inspiration theory. Dean Alford puts the objection founded on this diversity in the narratives as follows :—"The title over the cross was written in Greek. According then to the Verbal Inspiration theory, each evangelist has recorded the exact words of the inscription : *not the general sense*, but the inscription itself, not a letter less or more. This is absolutely necessary to the theory. Its advocates must not be allowed, with

convenient inconsistency, to take refuge in a common-sense view of the matter wherever their theory fails them, and still to uphold it in the main. And how it will here apply the following comparison will show:—

Matthew: "This is Jesus the King of the Jews" (Matt. xxvii. 27).
Mark: "The King of the Jews" (Mark xv. 26).
Luke: "The King of the Jews this" (Luke xxiii. 38).
John: "Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews" (John xix. 19).

In trying to construct an argument from this variation in these accounts of this inscription, Dean Alford assumes what he has no right to assume, viz., that the theory he is assailing requires that each narrator shall give a full report of the thing narrated, whereas the theory simply demands that each narration shall contain nothing that is inconsistent with truth or fact, or with any other inspired account of the same thing. It is a remarkable fact that Dr. Alford has, in the words above quoted, furnished an illustration of the validity of this principle. He says that "the title over the cross was written in Greek," and does not give a single hint of its having been written also in Hebrew and Latin. Now would he regard himself as fairly dealt with if one were to found on his account of this same inscription a

charge of contradicting Matthew and Mark, who do not tell us in what language it was written, or of contradicting Luke and John, who inform us that it was written also in Hebrew and Latin? Dr. Alford, if he considered such a charge worthy of notice at all, would consider himself abundantly vindicated by replying (1) that what he said was true, for it is a fact that the inscription was written in Greek; (2) that he did not profess to be giving a full account in regard to that particular point. This reply would, undoubtedly, be considered satisfactory by all reasonable men, and no rejoinder would be listened to which did not establish the contrary of one or other of these two points. His accuser must show, either that the title was not written in Greek, or, failing this, that the author was professedly giving a full account of the languages in which the title was written. Anything short of this would be regarded as mere quibbling on the part of his assailant.

It is hardly necessary to point out that the principles involved in this defence are just as available for the advocates of the Verbal Inspiration theory as they are for Dean Alford. Except he can show, what he has made no attempt to show, either (1) that some of the accounts contain what is not true, or (2) that each evangelist professed to be giving a full account of the titles, his charge must fall to the ground, and his argument prove a failure. If Dean Alford, for a purpose deemed by himself

laudable and legitimate, viz., the overthrow of the Verbal Inspiration theory, could, in consistency with truth, select one of the facts presented in the accounts of the title over the cross, to the exclusion of two other facts of the same class and of equal prominence and importance, on what ground can he object to the Holy Spirit being represented as acting on the same principle of selecting particular facts, or phases of facts, for a specific and an important end? Unless it can be shown from the language of the narratives that they contain something contrary to truth or fact, or that they contradict one another, or that it was the avowed, or the implied, object of each narrator to give an exact copy of the title, the objection is utterly groundless.

From such style of criticism let us turn and look at this title in the light of the august occasion which has given rise to the writing of it, and consider whether we cannot find one great central idea to which Pilate was providentially guided to give expression in the wording of it, and to which each of the four evangelists bears witness, and to which they all bear witness in harmony with the law of evidence so as to show that they have not been guilty of collusion. The controversy which Pilate had with the accusers of Christ, the question which Pilate put to Him in regard to their accusations, the subject in regard to which the soldiers mocked Him both before, and during, His crucifixion, the point

brought out with prominence in the mockery and raillery of the chief priests, was the one which Pilate, as the instrument of God's providence, was moved to embody in the epigraph which he placed over Him on the cross. The point brought out so prominently by Pilate during the progress, and at the close, of the trial, was that the representatives of the Jewish nation were accusing and rejecting their King. "Behold your King," says the Roman governor. "Crucify Him, crucify Him," cry the Jews. "Shall I crucify your King?" is the rejoinder of Pilate. "We have no king but Cæsar," is the reply of these bloodthirsty men. This was the charge they preferred against Him, that He claimed to be a King, and to this Pilate again and again returns. It was so manifestly the sum and substance of the charge they laid against Him before Pilate that the very soldiers caught the idea and mocked Him, crying: "Hail, King of the Jews." In conformity with this leading feature of the trial, is the central fact to which all the four evangelists bear witness in their accounts of the inscription. Whatever else they omit, they all so order their narration that the momentous, the awful fact is proclaimed that the Sufferer who hangs on the accursed tree is the King of the Jews. To take the ground that the Holy Spirit, in placing this fact on record, was bound to keep by the literal wording of the title, is worse than trifling with this august subject. But except on the

assumption of such an obligation, or at least of such a purpose, the objection is destitute of force.

The sum and substance of the whole matter is just this: the Holy Spirit availed Himself of the knowledge which, in His providence, each evangelist possessed from his reading of the three inscriptions, perhaps translating, one the Hebrew, and another the Latin, and another giving, without translation of the other forms of the inscription, the one which needed no translation for the purpose of presenting, with that profusion of variety which characterises His agency both in nature and grace, the fearful fact that the Jews, in the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, had rejected and crucified their King. The object aimed at of necessity involved variety of narration, but so long as the variety reached not to a variation from truth and fact, there can be no valid objection against the procedure, or against the ascription of the language employed to the agency of the Holy Ghost.

6. There is what some regard as an insuperable objection to the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration, founded upon the ignorance, or lack of knowledge, manifested on some occasions, in regard to some subjects by the inspired writers. Paul, for example, confessed that he did not know that Caiaphas was high-priest, or how many persons he had baptised at Corinth. The Rev. C. A. Row, in his Bampton lectures on the "Christian Evidences viewed in

relation to Modern Thought" (second edition, pp. 45-47), advances a kindred objection, on the confession of this same apostle (1 Cor. vii.) that he had no command of the Lord for some of his teaching: "Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord, yet I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful." Mr. Row's comment on this and like statements in the context is, that the Apostle draws a distinction "between his own Apostolical judgment and the express commands of our Lord. The context," he alleges, "shows that his own decision on the points in question was not intended to have the force of invariable law, but to be subject to modification in conformity with the peculiar circumstances and character of the individual."

The answer to this class of objections is obvious. (1) The objectors confound Revelation with Inspiration. Because the sacred writer was not rendered omniscient he was not inspired. It does not follow that because Paul was not informed by the Spirit in regard to the priesthood of Caiaphas, or kept in memory of the numbers baptised by him in Corinth, he was not inspired to make record of the fact of his ignorance. We see *now* a sufficient reason for the record of the latter deficiency in Paul's reminiscence. He was guided to make it as an antidote to that sacramentarianism which places the administration of sacraments above the preaching of the word,

and makes the sacrament of baptism indispensable to salvation as the only channel through which grace, in the first instance, reaches the soul of man. Had Paul held this view of the ordinance of baptism, he certainly had never penned the passage in question. A Ritualist could not have given thanks that he had baptised so few, or have placed, as Paul has done, the preaching of the Gospel above the administration of that rite.

But instead of serving the cause of the anti-Verbalists in whose behalf these passages are constantly adduced, they furnish conclusive evidence of the necessity of the presence of the inspiring Spirit and of His agency in the production of an infallible record. If one who was not one whit behind the chiefest of the Apostles could not keep in memory more than five or six instances of his having administered the ordinance of baptism at a particular place, is it reasonable to believe that he could have held in accurate and infallible reminiscence the unsearchable riches of Christ which he was commissioned to make known? A memory which could not retain and reproduce an inventory of a few baptisms, was certainly not one to be trusted in the retention and reproduction of the whole counsel of God set forth in the writings of this Apostle. Our opponents, therefore, not only gain nothing, but, on the contrary, damage their own cause, by references to Apostolic ignorance or

to instances of acknowledged, defective, or imperfect reminiscence. The more imperfect the human agent, the more manifest the necessity of the supernatural agency of the Holy Ghost.

It is difficult to see the force or warrant of Prebendary Row's argument from the distinction drawn by Paul "between his own Apostolical judgment and the express commands of our Lord." His comment on this distinction is, that Paul's "decision on the points in question was not intended to have the force of invariable law, but to be subject to modification in conformity with the peculiar circumstances and character of the individual." It may well be asked: How does this Apostolic discrimination help the Prebendary in his argument? Does the fact that Paul has made this distinction between Christ's commands and his own Apostolical judgment prove that he was not inspired to record the fact that he did make such distinction, or that, in making the record of it, he was not determined by the Spirit, who moved him to record it, to select the most appropriate language for the expression of it? If the points in question were matters on which there was to be no invariable law, was it not well for these Corinthians to know that within these limits they were left free by Christ to modify their action "in conformity with the peculiar circumstances and character of the individual"? Thus viewed, the passage furnishes evidence of Divine

guidance in those forms of expression which our author adduces as arguments against it. The history of the Church proves that the things wherein the Apostle would have these Corinthians to know they were left free by Christ belong to that class in regard to which men would endeavour to bring them under a yoke of bondage. They are, throughout, things which are in themselves indifferent, and it is within this sphere that church rulers have made some of their greatest assaults upon the rights of the people of God. Knowing this beforehand, the omniscient Spirit provided an antidote by the hand of His servant Paul, moving him to record the fact that there were some things left to be regulated by human prudence and the light of nature, regarding which not even an Apostle might essay to command or bind.

But the distinction in question does not, as our author assumes, warrant the conclusion that Paul's Apostolical judgment was to be considered a mere private, unauthoritative opinion. The cases submitted for his decision by the Church at Corinth embraced points on which Christ had already decided, and points on which no indication of the mind of the Spirit had hitherto been given. The former the Apostle refers to decisions already delivered by the Lord, and upon the latter he gives, as the Prebendary himself expresses it, his own Apostolical judgment. That this judgment was a truly Apostolical

judgment and authoritative on the points in question appears (1) from the fact, that while the Apostle says he does not speak "by commandment," he is careful to say that he speaks "by permission." Now to speak "by permission" implies just what verbal inspirationists contend for. He who speaks "by permission," has the authority of Him who permits him, to speak what he is permitted to speak. It does seem impossible that the Church at Corinth could, in reading this reply to their letter, put any other interpretation upon this expression than that, in giving this judgment on these hitherto undecided points, the Apostle had the permissive sanction of the Holy Ghost. The idea cannot be entertained for a moment that the Spirit of God would have given (as the Apostle claims) permission to write these permitted judgments to a Christian church, to be placed on record for the Church in all time, if the sentiments or judgments had not His sanction as the most befitting for the occasion which had given rise to the questions submitted for Apostolic counsel. (2) At the close of the chapter where he delivers judgment on a kindred subject, he adds: "I think" (δοκῶ) "also that I have the Spirit of God." Now δοκῶ in the mouth of one who had Apostolic credentials may be taken as a modest form of expression carrying with it the very strongest assertion of the judgment in question. It is true that our author regards this passage as proving

that Paul "enforces his judgment with hesitation, as though it might be influenced by the peculiarities of his own mental temperament"; but it is difficult to reconcile this with his statement in the preceding page, viz., "Several passages also make it certain that he was capable of discriminating between those utterances which were due to Divine enlightenment, and those which were the result of his mere human judgment" (p. 457). According to this latter averment, it would seem that the Apostle was capable of discriminating between his own mere human judgments and the communications of the Spirit, and that "several passages make this certain." According to the former, however, he sometimes had hesitation in deciding whether his judgment might not "be influenced by the peculiarities of his own mental temperament." Now as the very point about which it is alleged the Apostle had this hesitation was as to whether he had the Spirit of God or not, it seems impossible to reconcile these two statements. The one affirms what the other calls in question, for in the one we are assured that the Apostle could discriminate, while the other affirms that he hesitated to speak with confidence, where the point in question was the very point on which, our author acknowledges, he was able to discriminate.

Nor is this inconsistency the only objection to which Mr. Row's statement regarding the hesitation of the Apostle is exposed. The necessary tendency

of such a representation regarding the subjective estate of the inspired writers, is to shake confidence in their writings altogether as an authoritative rule of faith or practice. If a sacred writer was doubtful in any one case as to whether "his utterances were due to Divine enlightenment" or "the result of his mere human judgment," there is no guarantee that he may not have erred in the interpretation of his mental estates in other cases, and have ascribed to the Holy Ghost utterances which were the offspring of his own imagination, "influenced by the peculiarities of his own mental temperament." If the writers of the sacred volume were not certain that they possessed the Spirit of God in their formal deliverances to the Church of God, there is no warrant for regarding their deliverances as an authoritative and infallible exhibition of the Divine will.

In confirmation of his interpretation of the Apostle's language in this instance, Mr. Row contrasts it with Paul's style of speaking "elsewhere in this same epistle" (p. 457): "If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. xiv. 37). On this argument two remarks may suffice. (1) There is no warrant for restricting the expression, "the commandments of the Lord," to particular portions of the instructions given in this epistle, save the

remarks made by the Apostle in the seventh chapter, in which he discriminates between the commandments of the Lord and his own judgment. The insufficiency of this distinction as a warrant for our author's conclusion, however, has been already shown. In the instance mentioned in the seventh chapter, the Apostle is speaking of a specific command of our Lord's by which one of the cases appealed to him for decision had been already settled. When he says, therefore, that he had, or had not, a command of the Lord in that chapter, he simply means an antecedent deliverance deciding the point at issue, and by no means teaches that for his own judgments he had not the authority of Christ.

So far, indeed, is the passage (1 Cor. xiv. 37) from strengthening our author's argument, that when fairly interpreted, it can be claimed as a proof text on the other side. From an examination of the context it will be seen, that the Apostle is correcting abuses in the Church at Corinth which had arisen in connection with the gift of tongues, and in doing this, so far is he from having any hesitation about his own judgment, or suspicions about his judgment being "influenced by the peculiarities of his own mental temperament," that he gives judgment upon professed prophets who claimed to speak by the Spirit of God. If the Apostle could claim Divine authority for his judgments in regard to prophets and in regard to other matters referred to in this

fourteenth chapter, much more, may it be inferred, so far as the gravity of the points in question was concerned, might he advance such claim for his judgment in regard to matrimonial questions, delivered in the seventh chapter. (2) It may be remarked that even on the assumption that the Apostle was uncertain about the character of his own subjective estates on the particular occasion, and knew not whether or not he had the authority of the Spirit for his utterances, it would not follow that he was not inspired to place this fact on record as a warning to the Church not to regard what might be merely a counsel as an authoritative command.

In any event, therefore, and on any admissible interpretation, the passage in question cannot be relied on as furnishing, as our author and others imagine, a conclusive argument against the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration, but, on the contrary, when closely examined, furnishes abundant evidence of a forethought beyond mere human sagacity in providing for the protection of the members of the Church against the arrogant assumptions of church rulers, who would arise in the course of time, claiming for themselves legislative functions, and desiring to bind where Christ has left His people free. Such seems to be the design of the Holy Spirit in moving the Apostle to write as he has done, and to use the language he has employed; and the position taken

in regard to the points submitted to him for his judgment, is precisely the same as that taken in regard to meat in the eighth and ninth chapters of this epistle, and in the fourteenth chapter of his epistle to the Romans. Marriage, as well as meat, comes under the class of the indifferent, and the rule is the same in both cases. The only obligation imposed in either case is, that our actions in such matters be regulated by a due regard to the spiritual well-being of ourselves and others and the glory of Christ. Men are not bound to marry, but if they marry, they should marry in the Lord; neither are men bound to eat flesh, but whether they eat or drink, they are bound to act for the glory of God. Such is the will of Christ in all such matters, and, as the passages in question constitute the *Magna Charta* of the Church's liberties within this sphere, it is most unreasonable to assume, as anti-verbalists do, that the incidents which furnished the occasion for uttering its provisions, or the language in which they have been expressed, were determined by the will of man. The Author of the Revelation, from Genesis to the last book of the sacred Canon, presided over the marvellous evolution, determining the providential incidents which furnished the occasions for His communications to men, and raising up and qualifying His servants to utter, or record, His messages at the times, and in the measures, and in the terms, most suited to His sovereign good pleasure.

It is only by overlooking these fundamental principles, so clearly revealed in Scripture, that Christian apologists, of the class of Mr. Row, can be led to found objections to the doctrine of a Verbal Inspiration on such passages as this. If the utterance was of sufficient importance to demand the interposition of a special providence to supply the occasion for it, surely it is not too much to claim that a special agency of the Spirit would be vouchsafed in the determination of the form in which it was to be placed on record for the instruction of the Church in all the ages of her history. If the incidents which gave rise to this epistle of Paul to the Corinthians were designed, in the providence of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, to furnish an opportunity for the issue of a Bill of Rights in defence of the liberties of God's people, there can be no reason for the allegation that the Apostle, in drafting it, and delivering it, was hesitating as to whether he was delivering, for the guidance of those who had invoked his counsel, his own judgments influenced by his own peculiar temperament, or expressing the will of the Holy Spirit on the all-important question of Christian liberty.

LECTURE VIII.

Inspiration and Science.

IT is objected to the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration that this doctrine is largely responsible for the antagonism which exists between science and Revelation. Referring for illustration to the first chapter of Genesis, Mr. Row remarks: "One point may, at all events, be considered settled, viz., that the meaning which the exigencies of a particular theory of Inspiration naturally suggested is in direct opposition to the scientific facts. It is beyond question that the passage has produced a very general belief that the entire created universe was brought into its present form in a period of six natural days. This is obviously the meaning which would be attached to it by a reader unacquainted with the facts of science" (p. 461). Here the apparent opposition of the narrative of creation to scientific facts is by the author laid at the door of "a particular theory of Inspiration," by which we are, doubtless, to understand the Verbal Inspiration theory. It was that theory, or the exigencies of it,

which suggested the interpretation which has brought about this unfortunate antagonism. But no sooner has the Prebendary made this charge than he proceeds to furnish material for meeting it. He immediately, in the very next sentence, adds: "But it is no less certain that when the passage is closely scrutinised, uninfluenced by any particular theory as to the nature of Inspiration, it is capable of bearing, without offering any violence to it, a different interpretation." Now it is respectfully submitted that the author has here vindicated the theory he had in the previous sentences assailed as the fomenter of strife between Genesis and Science. If the passage, "when closely scrutinised, is capable of bearing, without offering any violence to it, a different interpretation," it must be owing to the peculiar felicity of the language in which it is expressed. This, of course, is all one with saying that the language of the passage does not, necessarily, teach the theory of the work of creation to which the author objects. But, still further, he draws attention on the next page "to the singular fact that there are two expressions in this chapter which an evolutionist who believes in Theism might accept as a popular exposition of his theory. The first of these," he says, "occurs in the description of the creation of the marine animals, and the second in that of the land animals. In both cases the creation is ascribed, not to an immediate, but to

a mediate agency," etc. From the fact that the earth is commanded to produce the land animals and the waters the marine animals, he draws the inference that "it cannot be denied that as far as the language goes, it is quite consistent with such a theory of evolution as affirms that the Creator has acted through a principle of this kind as the intermediate agent in effecting His creative work." What our author means when he speaks of "the principle" of evolution as "the intermediate agent in effecting the creative work" seems difficult to be conceived. One could understand what is meant by the principle on which an agent acts, but the agency of a principle is an idea which passes all comprehension. The author might as well speak, as some do by implication, of the causality of a law, as of the agency of a principle. Such looseness of language in treating of scientific subjects has wrought much confusion, and has proved a fruitful source of great errors. It ought to be known by all men, and it should be recognised as an unchallengeable truth by all scientists, that a law cannot be a cause; and, for a like reason, it ought to be held as an unquestionable truth that a principle cannot be an agent.

But even though it were conceded that the author's theory of Evolution is true, it is difficult to see how all this militates against the theory of Verbal Inspiration. If the language of the narra-

tive is quite consistent with a theistic evolution, it must be the fault of the interpretation put upon it, and not the fault of the theory of Verbal Inspiration, that has brought about the collision and conflict which our author deplores. A verbal inspirationist, so far as his theory or its exigencies demand, can go as far in reconciling the language in question with a theistic evolution as Mr. Row can, and feel that there is nothing in the procedure inconsistent with his theory. And not only so, but he can do what none but a verbal inspirationist can do: he can tarry, as the points of harmony between Scripture and any defensible scientific theory are brought out, to admire the wisdom by which the sacred writers were inspired to employ language, in their account of the wonderful works of God in the founding of the heavens and the earth, and the stocking of the latter with plants and animals, that is quite consistent with the findings of science. As he does so, his confidence in the verbal theory will not suffer damage. He will, on the contrary, be confirmed in the conviction that no writer in the days of Moses, nor even in the days of the alleged final redactor, could, in the exercise of his own unaided powers, have treated of such themes without employing language utterly irreconcilable with the sciences of Astronomy and Geology. And more than this: he will be led to the conclusion that the harmony of the narrative

with the discoveries of all that science can claim to have established, can be accounted for only on the assumption of an inspiration of the Spirit of God which extended to the determination of the language in which the narration has been expressed.

It is true, our author does not hold that the harmony is complete, for on pp. 463-4 he remarks that "still, close as is the resemblance between the geological record and this chapter, thus interpreted, it must be candidly admitted that the geological facts do not exactly correspond in all their minute details with the events as they are here narrated." Suffice it to say that this verdict is altogether premature. No geologist is in a position to give such a deliverance as this. The state of this nascent science (for it is even yet but nascent) does not justify any one, whether scientist or theologian, in asserting that the two records, the Biblical and the geological, do not correspond. Mr. Row charges the verbal theory with almost all the evils arising out of the antagonism existing between Science and Revelation, while the fact is, that these evils are largely chargeable upon those who are trying to adjust the sacred narrative to the unwarrantable generalisations of an immature science, for which some scientists and some theologians claim all the authority and respectful deference which belong to the exact sciences. As our author admits, there is a wonderful consistency of language

with fact, the lack of correspondence being limited to minuter details, and it may be added that apparent discrepancies between the inspired record and the record of the rocks, which were once deemed by some men to be beyond all possibility of adjustment, have been satisfactorily reconciled. Under these circumstances, no one is justified in taking the position that apparent discrepancies now current, or as yet unreconciled, shall continue to defy all attempts at solution. We are not, by the verbal theory, reduced to the necessity of accepting the author's alternative, "to put a strain upon the language of the chapter which it will not bear or deny the scientific facts, or, if we can do neither, abandon our belief in Christianity as a Divine revelation." On the contrary, it is only by straining ascertained scientific facts, or drawing upon the scientific imagination, facetiously so called, for their facts, as in the case of the Huxleyian Bathybius, that some scientists have managed, with the help of some would-be scientific theologians, to produce the impression reflected in Mr. Row's book, that Science and Revelation are in irreconcilable antagonism.

It is worthy of note that throughout his strictures on "popular theories of Inspiration," our author has confounded theories of Inspiration with particular interpretations of Scripture. It is hardly necessary to say that these two things are not one and the

same thing. The historical fact is that theologians differing as wide as the poles in their interpretation of Scripture, have been at one regarding the doctrine of Inspiration. No one nowadays needs to be told that the Reformation symbols, especially those of the Reformed Churches as distinguished from the Lutheran, agreed with the Church of Rome on this subject, teaching, as the Council of Trent does, the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration in the strongest possible terms.

A very extraordinary instance of this confusion of thought on the part of our author occurs in connection with his argument against Verbal Inspiration and kindred doctrines of Inspiration, from the antiquity of man (pp. 460—470). "According to the popularly accepted theories of Inspiration," he alleges, "the Scriptures are pledged to a system of chronology which affirms that not more than about seven thousand years can have elapsed since the first creation of man, nor more than about five thousand years since the Flood; and any alleged discoveries of science which prove that man has existed on the earth for a longer period are consequently inconsistent with the claims of the Bible to contain a Divine revelation."

In reply to this argument all that need be said is that the doctrine condemned is not the result of "popularly accepted theories of Inspiration," but derived from conclusions reached by interpretations

for which no one can claim the absolute and unquestionable authority of the inspired record. If the Scriptures, either by express statement or by necessary consequence, taught that "not more than seven thousand years can have elapsed since the first creation of man," there might be some ground for our author's objection to any theory of Inspiration which pledges the Holy Ghost to the language of the record, and, indeed, to any theory of Inspiration which pledges Him to the record at all. As, however, the Scriptures, fairly interpreted, fix neither the antiquity of the universe nor the antiquity of man, his charge is groundless, and his apology for the Bible altogether gratuitous. The author himself, in a footnote (p. 470), has indicated the material of a satisfactory reply to his own argument. Referring to the omission of names in the genealogical table in the first chapter of the Gospel by Matthew, he remarks that "this renders it highly probable that in the genealogies of the Old Testament, especially in those of remote times, other omissions, and extending over far greater intervals of time, may have taken place." Both the fact and the conjecture may be conceded, and yet no case against Verbal Inspiration (the theory singled out for condemnation in this note) be made out. Matthew does omit the names specified, and the genealogies of the Old Testament, as may be seen on inspection and comparison with each other, make similar omissions. But what does

all this prove as against the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration? It simply sustains the theory of Biblical chronology, now entertained by some of the most reverent Biblical critics, that the Bible does not furnish sufficient data for a system of chronology. Of course, if there were something affirmed in these abridged genealogical tables that was not true, there would be ground for even a much more sweeping condemnation than our author has uttered, but this cannot be shown. It is true that a charge to this effect is made in the text of p. 470, where our author draws attention to what he evidently regards as a mistake, viz., that "a person whom he" (Matthew) "designates as the son of another was in reality his great grandson"! This remark may well shake one's confidence in the genealogical lore of Mr. Row. Was Bartimæus mistaken when he appealed to the mercy of Jesus of Nazareth, confessing Him to be the Son of David? or was Christ claiming by implication a genealogy to which He had no right, when He silenced His adversaries by the question, "If David in spirit call Him Lord, how is He then his Son?" Or was He mistaken in the pedigree of Zaccheus when He recognised him as "a son of Abraham"? If it be an argument against the accuracy of Matthew, that "he designates as the son of another one who was in reality his great grandson," what are we to think of the accuracy of Christ Himself, who designates as "a

son of Abraham" a man who did not come into existence for at least two thousand years after Abraham was dead?

On this whole subject of Hebrew genealogy, it may be regarded as an instructive fact, that the Jewish chief priests and scribes—who certainly knew as much about the principles on which genealogical tables were wont to be constructed as any modern critic can lay claim to, and who had every reason, from their point of view and their anti-Messianic policy, to challenge the slightest flaw in the chain of our Saviour's descent—never called in question this table of the first Evangelist. Our author thinks that "the proper reply to all difficulties of this kind is that we have no certainty from an *à priori* or an *à posteriori* source, that the writers of the Bible possessed a superhuman guidance on subjects of this description; and our duty," he alleges, "is not merely to hold such opinions secretly in our bosoms, but openly to announce and act on them, in order that the many stumbling-blocks which now endanger the faith of thousands may be removed out of their way." The meaning of this short and easy way of dealing with such alleged discrepancies, of which the one charged against the genealogical table in the Gospel by Matthew may be regarded as a fair specimen, is that they are at once to be recognised as proving that, "on subjects of this description," the writers of

the Bible possessed no superhuman guidance. And let it be observed that this demand is made by a writer, who had, on the very page on which he makes it, given abundant evidence that he is utterly unqualified to pronounce a judgment regarding the case on which he bases his demand. Such criticism may imagine that it is removing "stumbling-blocks which endanger the faith of thousands," but the fact is, it is conjuring up stumbling-blocks where none exist, and is thus doing, so far as its influence goes, the very thing it charges upon the advocates of Verbal Inspiration. Granting that there can be pointed out a few petty discrepancies which have hitherto resisted all attempts at adjustment,—and this is all that can be said by any fair-minded critic,—is it reasonable to demand, as Mr. Row does, that it should be at once admitted that the solution of them is impossible, or that the only righteous course is to confess that the sacred writers possessed no "superhuman guidance on subjects of this description"? A scientific criticism will not be in such unphilosophic haste to reach its conclusions. It will say: "Other apparent discrepancies, which once seemed incapable of being reconciled, have, nevertheless, yielded to better information and riper scholarship, and remembering this happy issue of patience and painstaking in the past, it will wait with reverence for further enlightenment, in the full assurance that a more thorough investigation will result in the vindication of the

Divine Record against the hasty, irreverent generalizations of a Rationalistic Criticism."

In justification of this method of treating alleged, or actual, discrepancies, our author himself may be introduced as a witness. On pp. 472, 473, speaking of "discrepancies which are alleged to exist in the Gospels," he remarks: "These have been magnified to an extent that is absurd. A large number of them admit of an easy reconciliation under the guidance of common sense. Others arise from the fragmentary nature of the narrative and our ignorance of the entire facts. Not a few of the remainder owe their origin to the fact that the events have been grouped in reference to the religious purpose of the author rather than in the order of strict historical sequence. Of a few the reconciliation is difficult. Of these the three-fold account of the miracle at Jericho may be mentioned as an example; St. Matthew's Gospel affirming that two blind men were cured, while it is the obvious meaning of St. Mark's narrative that only one was cured at the entrance of the city, and that of St. Luke, that a single blind man was cured by our Lord after He had passed through the city. . . . With respect to difficulties of this description (and they are very few) the best solution will be found in the principle laid down by Butler, that it is impossible to affirm that if the contents of the Gospels were left to be handed down by tradition

during the first thirty years of the existence of the Church, inaccuracies may not have been introduced in the process."

As Butler's principle has been antiquated by recent Biblical scholarship, it cannot be accepted; and as it is conceded that the alleged discrepancies are so few and unimportant, it is manifestly more scholar-like, as it is certainly more reverent, to await further enlightenment. It cannot, however, be conceded by any one acquainted with the relation of the Apostles, who founded the Christian Church, to Christ, on the one hand, and to His Church, on the other, that "the contents of the Gospels were left to be handed down by tradition during the first thirty years of the existence of the Church." On the contrary, it has been demonstrated that the truths on which the Church was founded, and by which she was fed, were placed on record within the Apostolic period, and that the books containing this record were placed, by the Church of the Apostolic times, side by side with the Old Testament Scriptures, and regarded with the same reverence as the word of God. See our author's argument from the Pauline epistles in this same volume, Lect. vi., as summed up at p. 321, together with "The New Testament Scriptures," by Dr. Charteris, Lect. iv.

No doubt, the three thousand converted by Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost were introduced to the Church by oral instruction; but, in the first

place, it was oral instruction communicated by Inspiration; and, in the second place, the oral instruction was an oral exposition of the Old Testament record. Under such tradition—a species of tradition which prevailed throughout the Apostolic period—there was no room left for the introduction of the inaccuracies hypothecated in "the principle laid down by Butler," so highly commended by our author. The time singled out by Bishop Butler as the period during which inaccuracies might have crept in, viz., the first thirty years of the existence of the Church, is the period of all others in which such inaccuracies were sure to be corrected and suppressed. The Apostles were very careful to repress and rebuke the slightest departure from their own oral or written instruction. No deviation from what they had received by Revelation and communicated by Inspiration was, for a moment, tolerated. As soon as Paul hears of the divisions and abuses which were disturbing the peace of the Church at Corinth, and leading to the profanation of the Lord's Supper, he recalls them, by an epistle, to the standard of faith and purity as given in his oral instructions. A reference to his language will show that, as far as his influence reached [and it was recognised, as Peter informs us (2 Peter iii. 15, 16), throughout the Churches], there was no room left for the corruption of Apostolic teaching in "the first thirty years of the existence of the

Church." Referring to his original account of the ordinance which had been so grossly abused by these Corinthians, he says, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you," etc. (1 Cor. xi. 23). Two remarks may be made on this Apostolic admonition :—1. That the minuteness with which it rehearses the original instruction proves that Paul attached great importance to the language employed ; 2. That in his day, which was certainly within the period assigned for the possible corruption, no departure from the simplicity and purity of Gospel ordinances as instituted by Christ was permitted. His Epistle to the Galatians proves that the position taken in regard to the Lord's Supper was taken also in regard to the whole Gospel (Gal. 1. 8).

Nor was Paul singular in this rigid adherence to Apostolic utterances as a prophylactic against traditional corruptions. The language of Peter in his second epistle, chapter second, shows the importance he attached to the preservation of the Apostolic teaching in its pristine purity as the ultimate standard of appeal. "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you ; in both which (αἷς) I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance ; that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the prophets, and of the commandment of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour. Knowing this first, that there shall

come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts."

These Apostolic testimonies, placed on record within the period of the alleged traditional corruption, may suffice as a reply to all arguments, whether analogical or critical, which proceed upon the assumption that the Church, during the first thirty years of her existence, was left to the doctrinal uncertainty which must ever attach to oral instruction handed down through the medium of oral tradition. There is every reason to believe that the Apostles, within this very period, and prior to their "decease," as Peter puts it (2 Peter i. 15), took care to put in her hands, in writing, the Gospel delivered at first orally, and largely as comments upon, and expositions of, the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. The very passage in the introduction of the Gospel by Luke, upon which our author endeavours to build an argument against the verbal theory of Inspiration, may be adduced in confirmation of this claim. His Gospel was written, as he informs us, to correct accounts given by some others of the things which had been delivered to the Church by the Apostles. Taken together with the instances already given, this action of the Evangelist proves that the primitive Church was not left to the uncertainties of oral tradition.

Our author has used a very ungenerous expres-

sion regarding those who are not ready to acknowledge as discrepancies what he is pleased to pronounce such. He insinuates, pretty plainly, that there are some who are conscious of the existence of such discrepancies, who, nevertheless, do not openly announce, and act on, their own convictions. This is a style of representation very common in the present day. The advocates of the doctrine of conditional immortality, and the whole school of eschatologists to which they belong, deal in such insinuations, and endeavour to produce the impression, that a vast body of ministers believe as they do, but are afraid to confess the truth. In a word, these subverters of the immemorial doctrine of the Church, both in regard to the final doom of the finally impenitent, and the relation of the sacred record to the inspiring Spirit, wish to be regarded as the only wise apologists, and the only critics and theologians who can fairly lay claim to the grace of Christian candour!

As regards the author's general position on the question of Inspiration, it is simply that taken by "the newer criticism," viz., that the Bible contains, but is not, the word of God. Adapting Butler's principle of an *ad hominem* against the deists, who, though believing that the universe exhibits many imperfections, yet hold that it is the work of God, he takes the ground that, in like manner, there may be imperfections in the Bible, and yet its claims to a

Divine authorship be equally valid. He who recognises an imperfect universe as a work of God, despite its imperfections, cannot consistently refuse to accept the Bible as a Divine Revelation on the ground of its imperfections. If the deist accepts the revelation of God made in this imperfect universe, with what show of consistency can he reject the revelation of Him made in the Bible because of the imperfections he finds therein?

Remarks on this Analogical Reasoning.

(1) It is perfectly conclusive as against deists. Butler was dealing with deists, and in all disputations with those who hold, as deists do, that the universe is imperfect, and that, nevertheless, it furnishes sufficient evidence of a Divine authorship, the method adopted by him, in his Analogy, is all that is needed to meet those objections which are made against the sacred Scriptures on the ground of their alleged imperfections.

(2) Touching the so-called imperfections of the universe, it may be remarked that charges of this kind against God's works are as irreverent as they are groundless. Such estimates of God's works are very different from that given by Himself at the close of the creative week. Pronouncing, by anticipation, a judgment of condemnation upon all such critical profanation of His workmanship, He declared, that "everything that He had made was very good"

—good exceedingly (Gen. i. 31). This, as the passage referred to shows, is the Divine verdict after a review of His works in all their teeming variety. "And God saw (וַיַּרְא) ("looked at," "contemplated," "considered") everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." This one sentence removes, at one stroke, the entire basis of all that our author has attempted to found on the analogical reasoning of Butler. God's estimate of His own work, after an omniscient scrutiny which took in its every department with all that it embraced, furnishes a sufficient reply, and ought to be regarded as a very emphatic rebuke to those who presume to charge with imperfection the productions of His wisdom and power wherewith He has filled to repletion this wondrous universe.

(3) The alleged imperfections of God's works in nature are gradually disappearing with the progress of science. It is becoming more and more manifest that the correlation and interdependence of the several parts of creation, are not limited to the magnitudes and motions of the orbs of heaven. The doctrine is gaining credence, very rapidly, that these mutual relationships extend throughout the entire range of the organic and inorganic worlds. It is only such scientists as Moleschott and Haeckel, and such philosophers as Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill, who, in order to overthrow the teleological argument, endeavour to point out such imper-

fections as our author assumes. Against the assumptions of these foes of teleology it is satisfactory to be able to adduce the testimony of a scientist, who is quite the peer of any of them as a physical investigator, who, although he holds with them in their opposition to the teleological argument, nevertheless has the candour to confess, as he does in his "Fragments of Science" (vol. i. p. 72), that "nature is not an aggregate of independent parts, but an organic whole," and that there is nothing in it existing out of relation, that all its parts are but the elements of a unity to whose perfection each, in its measure, furnishes its contribution. In a word, as Humboldt has demonstrated in his "Kosmos," "nature considered *rationally*, that is to say submitted to the process of thought, is a unity in diversity of phenomena; a harmony, blending together all created things, however dissimilar in form and attributes; one great whole (τὸ πάν), animated" (as he adds in a semi-pantheistic strain) "by the breath of life." (Introduction, pp. 2, 3.)

(4) These unquestionable, scientific testimonies, are sufficient to show the unwisdom of basing theories of Inspiration, as our author has done, upon such unscientific criticisms of God's works as charge them with imperfection. These criticisms of the works of God do violence to the very principle laid down by Butler, on which our author founds. They assume, on the part of the critics,

the capacity to judge *à priori* how God should have created the universe, and what His aim in creating it was ; and hence undertake to determine whether the individual portions of it, which come under human observation, are suitable elements in the great aggregate of means for the attainment of this antecedent design. These are very large assumptions, and they are as unwarrantable as they are large. No one is in a position to judge of the perfection or the imperfection of the parts, who does not comprehend the whole ; and as no finite mind can comprehend the Infinite Worker or His work, no order of created intelligence is in a position to prefer against any part of His work the charge of imperfection. Butler's general principle is perfectly valid, and the position assumed by him altogether unchallengeable. It is perfectly true that we are incompetent to judge, *à priori*, what should be the contents of a Divine Revelation, or in what terms it should be communicated. This were nothing less than to forecast the mysteries of Redemption. On both these points the Revelation itself is at one with Butler. It agrees with him regarding the former, for it declares that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him ; and it agrees with him in regard to the latter, for it informs us that these undiscoverable truths are given, " not in the words

which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." But Butler has no warrant for proceeding farther and assuming that this principle covers the case of an imperfectly recorded Revelation. The imperfections wherewith sin has marred the work of creation, can never be accepted as furnishing an analogy for the alleged imperfections ascribed to the Revelation wherein is unfolded the remedial economy. As will be shown immediately, the argument proceeds upon the assumption that there is no difference between God's agency in creation and His agency in providence.

(5) It has been shown already, and has been admitted by the author, that the alleged discrepancies are very few and unimportant, and that many of them admit of reconciliation. The course suggested by this state of the case is obvious. Instead of drawing the hasty and unwarrantable conclusion that the remaining discrepancies, hitherto unreconciled, are irreconcilable, and belong to the text as it came from the hands of men who spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, it is the part of wisdom to tarry for further light. This is not the counsel of an *à priori* abstract theory. On the contrary, it is the obvious result of a genuine, critical investigation, which has solved so many critical problems in the past, and has shown that the obstacles they presented in the way

of the theory of Verbal Inspiration, can be removed without doing violence to the language of the sacred text. Surely, where the alternative is a probable solution, or an acknowledgment of imperfection in the Inspired Record, no one possessing that spirit of reverence which should characterise the Biblical critic, can hesitate as to the choice he will make. Never, until it has been shown (which never can be shown) that the discrepancy existed in the inspired autograph as it came from the hand of the inspired writer, will any reverent Biblical critic accept the conclusion that the Holy Scriptures, as they took form under the afflatus of the Inspiring Spirit, were marred on the wheel of the human agency. The opponents of the verbal theory have a much harder task to accomplish than to prove that there are imperfections in the sacred text, as it now stands. Proving this, even though they succeeded, they have still before them the impossible task of proving that such imperfections existed in the original autographs. This is a critical achievement beyond the possibilities of critical science, as the autographs are not to be found.

It has been urged by the opponents of Verbal Inspiration, that one may as well admit the existence of imperfections in the autographs of Scripture as in the apographs, or in our present manuscripts. It is argued that, if God could permit the Revelation to be marred in the trans-

mission from generation to generation, there is no reason why He might not have permitted it to be marred at the outset. If an imperfect text can communicate the Divine will to men now, why may not that will have been made known at first through a like imperfect medium? The answer to such reasoning is not far to seek. Take the parallel case of the creation of man. Will any one venture to say, that as God permitted man by his disobedience to mar the Divine image in which he was created, He might have brought him into existence in an estate of moral imperfection? Even Pelagians go no farther in this matter than to teach that man was created in an estate of moral equilibrium, without bias towards either good or evil. None save the advocates of the doctrine of occasional causes, or absolute necessitarians, venture to charge man's moral imperfections, or positive depravity, upon the Author of man's nature. All who possess Scriptural views of the holiness of God, and cherish towards Him those feelings of reverence which His character should inspire in the minds of all holy intelligences, turn away, instinctively, from the thought of connecting Him, causally, with the origin of evil in either men or angels. It is held as an unquestionable truth by all right-minded men, that God may permit what He may not do.

And as it has been in the creation of man and the permission of him to fall from the estate wherein

he was created, so has it been in the production of the sacred text and its subsequent marring through the agency of man. As God, in the creation of man, breathed into his nostrils the breath of a perfect moral life, so did He, in the production of the sacred oracles, breathe into agents, providentially fitted for the parts assigned them, the breath of a perfect inspiration. As the Divine agency extended to the production of the record, we cannot, without ascribing imperfection to the Divine Agent, who was the Holy Ghost, speak of that record as originally imperfect. Having furnished by His immediate Inspiration a perfect record, as by creation He had produced a perfect man, He could, without impeachment, permit the custodians of the record, as He had permitted the custodian of the moral life, to mar His original workmanship. If it is admissible, as Butler assumes, and as Mr. Row allows, to argue from analogy in dealing with the subject of Inspiration, here is the analogue historically presented. The analogue, as given by Butler and accepted by Row (and stated correctly and urged conclusively as against a deist), is not the original workmanship of God, but God's workmanship marred by the sin of man. This is a fatal flaw in their analogical argument as applied to the doctrine of Inspiration, for it has led them to ascribe to the direct agency of God what was due to the agency of man. Correctly stated, the analogy holds in every point;

and the argument proceeds from God's works of creation and providence in the one case, to His works of creation and providence in the other, and not from the vicious and false analogy of a work of providence to a creative work.

Before passing from this point, it may not be out of place to notice Mr. Row's concession in regard to the conclusiveness of Mr. Mill's anti-teleological reasoning. On p. 449 he says: "These conclusions are inevitable if we admit the truth of the premises. Mr. Mill has urged them in his posthumous essays with unsparing logic. The only mode of escaping from the inference which he draws is one which will be accepted by every theist, namely, by denying the validity of his assumption that the impress of perfection must of necessity be stamped on all the works of a perfect creation." The reasoning to which this concession is made, as given by the author, is as follows: "It is unquestionable that the present moral order of the universe is not a perfect manifestation of this attribute" (the attribute of justice). "Hence it is inferred that the Being who has made it, must be imperfect either in justice, in wisdom, or in power." Such is the author's estimate of this argument that he sees no mode of escape but by denying the validity of what it assumes, viz., that "the impress of perfection must of necessity be stamped on all the works of a perfect Creator."

It is respectfully submitted that theism is not

driven, by the force of Mr. Mill's logic, to accept his three-horned dilemma as presenting the only alternative open to it. If our author had not, at this stage, forgotten the lessons taught him by his Butler, he would not have thought of making any such concession to such irreverent and crude reasoning. He would, on the contrary, have replied, with the author of the "Analogy," (1) that the constitution and course of nature are but parts of a moral scheme as yet but partially revealed, and (2) that even in these initial steps of its manifestation, it reveals a moral Governor who is perfectly just.

6. It is very often alleged in objection to the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration, that the sacred writers do not claim such a degree of Divine assistance. Mr. Row goes even farther, and puts this objection in the form of an absolute disclaimer of any such aid. On p. 452 he says, "Surely nothing is more absurd than on mere abstract principles to attribute to the writer of a book of Scripture such a degree of Divine assistance as he himself apparently disclaims. Let us take an illustration," he proceeds, "from St. Luke's Gospel. If the Verbal or Mechanical theory, or any of its modifications, is correct, every word in this Gospel must be the dictation of the Divine Spirit. Yet in the preface the information as to the sources whence the author received his materials is of a most definite character. He tells us that he instituted a careful investigation into the truth of

the facts which he has narrated; and that, while he was not an eye-witness of them himself, he has compiled his narrative from the testimony of those that were; and he adds that the purpose he had in view was that his readers might know the certainty of the things in which they had been instructed. Yet, notwithstanding these affirmations, the exigencies of theory have induced persons to affirm that the contents of this Gospel were dictated by the Divine Spirit."

Whatever our author may have failed to establish by this reference to the Gospel by Luke, he has succeeded in demonstrating his own misconception of the question under discussion. Granting him all that he assumes in regard to the way in which he alleges Luke came by his information, it will not follow, as he thinks, that the advocates of Verbal Inspiration must abandon their theory as inapplicable to the composition of Luke's Gospel. In arriving at this conclusion, he has fallen once more into an error which has greatly marred his book. He has confounded Revelation with Inspiration, the influx of the things of which Luke testifies into his own mind, with the efflux of the narration as projected by him upon the sacred page for the instruction of others. It is needless to say that this mistake vitiates and nullifies our author's argument. Even though he had proved that Luke had acquired all the information he has placed on record in the same

way as ordinary historians acquire their knowledge, he would not have touched the subject he professes to treat. All this might be true, and yet Luke, thus put in possession of the requisite information, may have been divinely determined in the selection, disposition, and expression of the matters he undertook to certify to the most potent Theophilus.

But one of the strangest of the many strange features of our author's critique on the verbal theory is the concession he makes (p. 452) regarding the aid this Evangelist may have received in his inquiries. "I fully admit," he says, "that there is nothing in his assertions inconsistent with the idea that the author was possessed of one or more of the supernatural endowments referred to in the Pauline epistles, as extensively bestowed on the members of the Apostolic Church, and which may have aided him in his inquiries and imparted additional strength to his natural faculties; but it is plain that it cannot have been of such a nature as to have superseded their use or rendered human sources of information unnecessary." It will be seen at once that the subject here discussed by the author is not Inspiration at all, but Revelation; and it will also be seen that, even in this process, he admits a certain, or rather an uncertain, degree of Divine assistance, imparting "additional strength" to the Evangelist's "natural faculties"—an expression which may mean much or little as the author or his readers may list.

Two questions here very naturally suggest themselves. 1. If such Divine assistance was granted to Luke in the collection of the material of his future Gospel, is it not very likely that it would have been extended to him in the recording of the information he had been strengthened to acquire? As the collection was but the first step in a process intended, not simply for the information of Luke himself, but chiefly and preëminently for the information of Theophilus and others, surely it is but reasonable to conclude, that the final step upon which "the certainty" of the "communication of that information accurately depended, would not be left to the unaided natural powers of the human agent. 2. As there is no reason to believe that our author holds that the Divine aid ended with the process of inquiry into the "human sources of information," the only question remaining is as to the extent to which this Divine aid reached in the framing of the record. On this point there does not seem to be much room for debate left to those who go the length to which our author has gone in the foregoing concession of Divine aid. As already stated, the design of the assistance rendered in both cases—in the collection of the material and the record of it—ought to put an end to the discussion. He who began the good work of the collection, and wrought in the Apostle, as our author seems to admit, both to will and to do according to His own

good pleasure, is one who is not in the habit of initiating a work and then abandoning it, or committing it to weak erring mortals to carry on to completion. The whole analogy of the faith is against the adoption of any such conclusion.

But our author has not only erred in confounding Revelation with Inspiration: he has also fallen again into a misconception in regard to the verbal theory of Inspiration, which may be justly said to characterise all he has written against that doctrine. He has confounded it here, as he has done all along, with the theory of dictation, and also with what is called the mechanical theory. He represents the theory he is opposing as teaching that the contents of this Gospel were dictated to Luke by the Divine Spirit, and that the aid he received was of such a nature as to supersede the use of his natural faculties. As has been already shown, the verbal theory neither teaches, nor implies, either of these doctrines of the Spirit's action on the minds of the sacred writers. All that is essential to it is, that the agency of the Spirit extended to the form of the utterance, or of the record, and determined the language employed in both cases. This is the true verbal theory, and it is all its advocates undertake to defend, as it is the position their opponents have to assail.

It is scarcely necessary to point out that there is nothing gained in attacking this position by framing

arguments against the theory of dictation or the mechanical theory. The advocates of the verbal theory do not, as has been already shown, undertake to solve the mystery of the Spirit's operation in determining the language employed by the subjects of His Inspiration. In this, however, they are not singular. Our author will find it as difficult to solve the mystery of those supernatural endowments by which he acknowledges additional strength was imparted to Luke's natural faculties. If, as the above statement implies, the natural powers of the mind can be supernaturally strengthened, one may reasonably conclude that the faculty of speech, man's noblest faculty, may be supernaturally strengthened ; and if this be a reasonable conclusion, it would seem to be anything but reasonable to say, that this faculty, supernaturally strengthened, might not be enabled to select, and give utterance to, the very words the inspiring Spirit designed to employ. One would like to know on what principle our author proceeds in determining the extent to which the supernatural strengthening reached, or how he has ascertained that it had to do only with the Evangelist's "inquiries," and not with the utterance or record of the result of his "inquiries"; or, if it had to do with the utterance or record at all, how he has made the discovery that it stopped short of determining the form and language employed. Before he has satisfied his own intelligence on these points, he will likely

begin to suspect that his theory of a Partial or "functional" Inspiration (pp. 432-3) is beset with as many difficulties as that of a Plenary Verbal Inspiration. He will very probably find out that before he can place a limit to the inspiring agency of the Spirit, he must needs possess an acquaintance with the operation and mind of the Spirit in this mysterious work, which no one, apart from a special Revelation, can claim. He will discover that he has fallen into the very error he has charged upon the advocates of the verbal theory, viz., of erecting his theory of limitation upon merely *à priori* principles—these principles, as disclosed in his argument, being (1) that the Spirit could not inspire the sacred writers verbally without dictating to them the words, and (2) that He could not determine them in regard to the form, or phraseology of the utterance, or the record, without reducing them to the rank of mere machines. It is needless to say that these are mere *à priori* assumptions, and it is equally unnecessary to show over again, what has been proved so often in the course of this discussion, that these assumptions are irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Spirit's agency in the regeneration and sanctification of the souls of men.

LECTURE IX.

Objection from Freedom of Reference to Old Testament Scriptures.

ANOTHER very common objection is thus stated by Mr. Row, p. 454:—"If one thing connected with this subject is more certain than another, it is that the mode in which the Old Testament Scriptures are referred to and quoted in the New, is fatal to all theories of mechanical or verbal inspiration." Of the "various theories propounded for the purpose," as he very charitably alleges, "of evading this difficulty," our author selects only one, which ascribes such variations from the Old Testament text to corruptions which have crept into it. This, he says, is a mere assumption, and creates far greater difficulties than it would solve. His reason for rejecting this theory is that, "if true, it would shake our confidence in the text of the Old Testament to its centre," inasmuch as "if errors have crept into the Old Testament to the extent to which they must have done in the instances in question, it follows that an equal amount of error must be diffused over

the entire volume of which these quotations form but a small portion."

On this critique let two remarks suffice. 1. That our author's inference has no foundation in the theory. He alleges that the charge of corruption of the text of "the Old Testament in the instances in question" involves a like charge against "the entire volume of which these quotations form but a small portion"! It is needless to say that no Biblical critic will accept this inference as a canon of criticism. Will any critic venture to say that interpolations which have been introduced in the text of the New Testament warrant a general charge of corruption against "the entire volume of which they form but a small portion"? Without entering upon the merits of this mode of solving the problem presented in this method of quoting the Old Testament Scriptures by New Testament writers, it is quite enough to say in reply to our author's sole attempt at argument on the point, that it is simply a *non-sequitur*, involving a principle which no critic would for a moment think of accepting. 2. It may be remarked, that Mr. Row has, very singularly, selected that mode of solution which very few apologists have adopted, and passed over those other solutions which are chiefly relied on by the ablest apologists of the age. What his reasons were for adopting this course, it is difficult to imagine. As he has not found room for them,

it may not be out of place to give one or two examples.

(1) One way of meeting this objection is to point to the parallel case of our mode of quoting the Scriptures of both Testaments. Accurate quotation of Scripture is a very uncommon virtue. At least, inaccurate quotation is exceedingly common, even among those who are most firm believers in the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration. Now, if our author's argument be valid, one would be justified in the inference that verbal-inspirationists, who do not quote *verbatim*, do not believe their own doctrine. As a matter of fact, however, they do believe the Scriptures to be verbally inspired, and yet do not feel that they are acting at all inconsistently so long as they express the sense of the passages quoted. It is, therefore, not by the accuracy, or inaccuracy, with which the Scriptures are referred to and quoted by any writer or speaker of the present day, that we are to ascertain his views regarding the inspiration of the sacred writers. And, in like manner, it is not, simply, by their mode of reference and quotation we are to discover the views of the New Testament writers in regard to the inspiration of the men who wrote the Scriptures of the Old Testament. The only proper course, in either case, is to judge of a man's views from his own avowal of them. As the New Testament writers have, in almost every possible way, testified their faith in the verbal

inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures, it would be as unfair, as it is unreasonable, to set aside this testimony borne by themselves regarding their own views, and come to a directly opposite conclusion by strained inference from apparent inconsistency in their mode of reference and quotation.

(2) To this objection another reply, of which our author takes no notice, is, that the New Testament writers often vary the language of the passages they quote from the Old, in order to give an authoritative interpretation of them. Such variation from the original text for exegetical purposes furnishes no ground for the inference that the authors of the variation did not believe in the Plenary Verbal Inspiration of the passages to which they refer. On the contrary, the variation is just what one might expect under the circumstances in which the New Testament writers were placed. They were the chosen and inspired interpreters of the Old Testament Revelation, commissioned by Him whose Spirit moved the Prophets of the olden dispensation to speak and write. Standing in such relation to that former record of the mysteries of Redemption, it had been passing strange if, in referring to it, they had found it so clear as to need no explanation, and had, therefore, given the ancient text in every instance verbatim as they found it. It is true, they might have given the sacred text as it stood, and then have added their own explanatory

comments; but in this, as in other matters, the Apostolic admonition may not be out of place for those who would prescribe rules for men acting under the special guidance of the Holy Spirit. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?" (Rom. xi. 34.) Inspired by the free Spirit, and enlightened with the light of a clearer Revelation, they reveal that freedom wherewith the indwelling Spirit, by the very fulness of His inhabitation, has made them free, and quote from the Septuagint where it differs from the Hebrew, and from the Hebrew where it differs from the Septuagint, and often cite a passage in a form in which it is not found in either the Hebrew or the Greek. In moving the New Testament writers to deal in this manner with the Old Testament, the Spirit, who is the Author of both the New Testament Revelation and the Old, was but asserting His own authority, while He was acting in conformity with a law of authorship which no one ever thinks of questioning as applied to uninspired writers. No one ever holds an author bound, when reiterating a statement, to keep by the exact phraseology of the first utterance of it. Surely, if such license is given to man, and is considered almost the birthright of human authorship, it is as irreverent as it is unreasonable to abridge, by such limitations as the objectors would impose, the liberty of the Spirit of the Lord. In the exercise of this

liberty He has shown Himself to be the same inspiring agent who wrought in the Prophets of the olden time, and who moved Moses, in reiterating the laws of the economy he was commissioned to inaugurate, to vary the language in which they were enunciated, according to time, and place, and circumstance. So prominent is this feature of the Spirit's authorship in the Book of Deuteronomy, that some critics, who will not grant the Holy Ghost the literary license which they demand for themselves, have drawn from it arguments against the unity of the Mosaic legislation, and have endeavoured to argue diversity of authorship from diversity of code, distributing, as the particular critic may list, the authorship among a series of redactors, and reserving to Moses scarcely any part of the record, save the Ten Words of the Moral Law.

General Remarks upon the Foregoing Objections.

This review of these objections, which are those most commonly urged against the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration, warrants the following remarks :—

1. They are, in almost every instance, based upon misconceptions of that doctrine, and are shown to be utterly groundless and pointless as soon as the doctrine is fairly stated. 2. In many instances, the theories of the objectors are liable to the same

objections. 3. While professing to proceed upon the inductive method, the anti-verbal theorists restrict their induction, almost exclusively, to apparent discrepancies, and leave out of view altogether, or try to explain away, the express statements of the sacred writers in which the claim of an inspiration extending to the form and language of the record, is unequivocally asserted. 4. This method of theorising, which is the most fruitful source of objections to the Scripture doctrine of Inspiration, is manifestly most unphilosophical and unscientific. No philosopher or scientist ever thinks of beginning his investigation of any subject by an examination of the objections which may be urged against the doctrine propounded for his acceptance. On the contrary, his first question is: On what evidence is this theory or hypothesis based? Having examined the evidence, he is in a position to judge of and estimate the force of the objections. And if the evidence is such as to satisfy him of the truth of the hypothesis, he will not abandon it because of his inability to meet all the objections which may be brought against it, so long as the facts on which it is based are unchallengeable, veritable facts, and so long as the objectors cannot show that the theory has not been fairly and logically deduced from a fair and legitimate interpretation of them. In this conclusion and resolve he will be further strengthened when he finds that the rejection of

the doctrine objected against must involve the objector in as great difficulties as those wherewith it is alleged the doctrine in question is alone beset.

All this applies with peculiar force to the case in hand, for the facts on which the verbal theory of Inspiration is founded are not, like the facts of nature, unexpounded phenomena, requiring a Newton or a Kepler to give them voice and utterance. They are chiefly express, formal statements, in which the mind of the Spirit is unequivocally delivered in regard to the very question under investigation. From these utterances the advocates of the verbal theory have deduced their doctrine, while their opponents utterly ignore, or positively discard, this class of facts, and frame their theories of a Partial inspiration, or of no inspiration at all, upon the basis of alleged discrepancies, most of which have been triumphantly reconciled. For the sake of the men who advocate such views, as well as for the truth's sake, it is necessary to make patent the shallow, unphilosophical, and unscientific character of such speculations. Writers of this class are ever boasting of their strict adherence to the principles of science and philosophy, and are most persistent in their representations of the Verbal theory as unphilosophic and unscientific. Of course, it must be assumed that they believe what they say; but it is manifest, on the slightest reflection, that they can entertain such views of their own theories

and of the Verbal theory only by losing sight of, or violating the first principles of a philosophic and scientific investigation of the subject they profess to treat. Denouncing all *à priori* speculations, they claim that theirs alone is the true inductive method; and yet they leave out of their induction the determining facts on which the whole issue depends.

In support of this charge reference may be made again to Prebendary Row's book (pp. 454-5). "The most important passages in the New Testament," he writes, "bearing on this question are our Lord's promises to His followers of such supernatural enlightenment as was necessary to qualify them for propagating His religion and founding His Church. That He promised them a supernatural assistance fully adequate to enable them to accomplish this work is expressly affirmed; but nowhere does He define its nature or extent. His three most definite promises are—first, that the Divine 'Spirit should guide them,' not into all truth generally, but into all *the* truth, which the context plainly limits to religious truth. A second assures them that the Spirit should teach them all things, and refresh their memories as to His utterances, a third that He would impart to them a knowledge of the future. There is yet one more, but it has no bearing on the present question, viz that when they would be summoned before the

established tribunals, the Spirit would suggest to them the proper materials for their defence."

Such is the author's induction of what he designates "the most important passages in the New Testament bearing on this question"! The whole territory traversed is embraced within five verses contained in three chapters of the Gospel by John (chaps. xiv. 26; xv. 26, 27; xvi. 13, 14).

Remarks on this Induction.

1. On the very face of it, there is evidence of its utter inadequacy as an induction of "the most important passages in the New Testament bearing on this question." No one acquainted with the New Testament Scriptures can accept these five verses, selected from these three chapters of the Gospel by John, as a full exhibition of "the most important passages of the New Testament bearing on this subject."

2. On the next page, our author varies his statement regarding the comprehension of these passages, and instead of alleging that they are "the most important passages in the New Testament bearing on this question," he says that "these constitute the whole of our Lord's promises on the subject." Under either representation, the induction must be pronounced defective. It does not embrace "the most important passages in the New Testament bearing on this question," nor does it embrace "the

whole of our Lord's promises on the subject." Enough has been said already on the former point to show, that the materials from which a scientific induction must be drawn are scattered broadcast over the whole New Testament, and embrace the personal characteristics and natural weakness and incapacity of the men to whom the writing of the New Testament was committed and their own views regarding the nature and extent of the agency of the Spirit who moved and guided them in the execution of their mighty task. With regard to the latter, our Lord's promises quoted from the Gospel by John, which were given on the night of His betrayal, are to be implemented by that "most important" promise made by Him after His resurrection, and immediately preceding His ascension, viz., "Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke xxiv. 49).

3. These promises of our Lord, thus enlarged beyond our author's enumeration, are to be interpreted, not as our author has done, by *à priori* conceptions of their nature and extent, limiting them to "religious truth," and expounding them so as to leave the Evangelists largely to themselves in their statements of facts and historical incidents which were to mirror forth the character and work of the Redeemer to His Church through all ages

but are, on the contrary, to be interpreted in the light of the anointing wherewith Christ was anointed for the execution of His prophetic functions ere He entered upon them, and in the light shed upon them by their fulfilment on the day of Pentecost, and in the light shed upon them by the claims of the men in whom they were fulfilled, and in the light shed upon them by the necessities of the case. No one has any warrant for pursuing any other method in dealing with such promises ; and he who will adopt this method will not only conclude that the Verbal theory is the only one competent to account for the phenomena to be explained, but will be surprised that any one, competent to form an opinion in the case, would ever think of accepting any form of the theory of a Partial Inspiration as furnishing an adequate solution of the mystery presented in the production of the Gospels and Epistles and other New Testament writings by the agency of the Apostles and Evangelists. The wonders of the day of Pentecost place the promises cited by our author, and the additional one mentioned above, outside the pale of conjectural exegesis, and demonstrate, as far as moral evidence can demonstrate anything, the truth of the Verbal theory of Inspiration, as on any fair interpretation they disprove all forms of the theory of a Partial Inspiration. Judging of the promises of our Lord to send the Holy Ghost by His fulfilment of those promises on the day of

Pentecost, there is no alternative left to those who accept the narrative of the events of that day but to regard those promises as guaranteeing an inspiration extending to the language of the message the Apostles were commissioned to deliver. There can be no doubt that the Apostles themselves regarded the gift of tongues as the fulfilment of Christ's promise to send the Holy Ghost upon them from the Father, and to endue them with power from on high ; for the Apostle Peter says so in language which admits of no other interpretation. He refers what the astonished multitude saw and heard to the fact that Christ, who had been exalted by the right hand of God, had received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, and had shed forth that unspeakable gift upon His servants. Of course, it is needless to add, that the gift of tongues carries with it the whole doctrine of Verbal Inspiration ; for the essence of such a gift is that it enables the subject of it to use words which he could not otherwise have used, not only communicating to him a vocabulary hitherto unknown to him, but enabling him to employ it in the communication of his thoughts to others.

4. The passage which our author erases from the brief catalogue he has furnished, on the ground, as he alleges, that it has no bearing on the present question, cannot be allowed to be so quietly set aside from this service. The passage referred to

is as follows: "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how" (πῶς) "or what" (τί) "ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (Matt. x. 19, 20; see also the parallel passages: Mark xiii. 11 and Luke xii. 11, 12, and xxi. 15). This passage our author sets aside, as it would seem, for two reasons: (1) because it has regard simply to forensic defences, and (2) because it simply guarantees the suggestion of materials for that purpose. It is difficult to see the force of these reasons for leaving this passage out of the induction. It does not follow from the fact that the promise of the Spirit's aid was, in this instance, restricted to particular occasions, that the character of the aid promised may not shed some light upon the subject of Inspiration. Indeed, our author's own view of the character of the aid promised in this particular case, although a very incorrect view, would lead one to conclude that the passage is pre-eminently fitted to shed light on the subject. He regards the promise as guaranteeing to the disciples the suggestion of proper materials for their defence. Now if the Spirit could suggest to the minds of men "the proper materials" for a legal defence, surely it is not unreasonable to conclude that He might suggest "the proper materials" for a Gospel narrative, or for an epistle that was

intended to minister edification to the Church of Christ throughout her militant career.

But the slightest examination of this passage will show that our author has no authority whatever for the limitation of the aid promised to the suggestion of the proper materials for the defence. The disciples were not simply told to take no thought (τί) what they should speak; but they were, besides, told to take no thought (πῶς) how they should speak; and they were told the reason why they should take no thought, or not make themselves anxious, in regard either to the matter or the manner of their speaking; and the reason given was, that it was not themselves that should speak, but the Spirit of their Father who should speak in them. Judging from this passage, then, there can be no doubt that the inspiration, for the occasion in question, extended to the language of the defence, for the Spirit was to take charge of both the τί and the πῶς, of both the *matter* and the *manner* of the defence. Such language admits of no interpretation save that assumed in the theory of Verbal Inspiration. So all-pervading and thorough was the aid promised, that the Spirit is represented as speaking in them, ministering both the matter and the form of their forensic deliverances. As it is expressed (Luke xxi. 15), there were given to them a *mouth* and *wisdom* which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist.

Supernaturally gifted with the wisdom necessary for the emergency, they were also supernaturally gifted with the "mouth" necessary for its appropriate utterance.

These promises, however, must not be expounded without reference to those occasions on which the disciples of our Lord were called upon to exercise the gifts in question. Of these there are several instances placed on record. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii.), although not delivered before a legal tribunal, was, nevertheless, a defence of himself and his brethren against the charge of drunkenness preferred against them publicly in presence of a multitude from all parts of the Roman Empire. This defence, delivered under a plenitude of inspiration which unquestionably extended to the language employed, embraced the leading truths of the Gospel of Christ. In his defence before the rulers, and elders, and scribes, in the presence of Annas the high-priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander (Acts iv.), this same Apostle proceeds in a precisely similar strain. His defence is neither more nor less than a summary of the essential points of the way of life opened up by Jesus of Nazareth, whom these same men had crucified. In his next defence before the same council (Acts v.), Peter dwells upon the same theme, evidently more intent on preaching Christ than on his deliverance from the

hands of his adversaries. After the same unique forensic model is the defence of himself delivered before this council by Stephen (Acts vii.) under an *afflatus* of the Spirit that caused his face to seem "as it had been the face of an angel." Throughout the material "*suggested*" (as our author will have it) is the material of a vindication of the Messianic claims of Jesus of Nazareth. Nor does the great Apostle of the Gentiles adopt a different line of defence. Whether he stands before an excited multitude of his kinsmen in the city of Jerusalem, or before the Jewish council, or before Felix in public or in private, or in the presence of King Agrippa, he weaves into his defence the central truths of the economy of grace—the death and resurrection of Him who was the hope of Israel.

Such is the character of the defences in question, of which, as both the Evangelists, Matthew and Luke, inform us, the Holy Ghost was to supply both the τί and the πῶς, both the matter and the manner, and to which, as Matthew and Mark declare, the Holy Ghost sustained a relation so intimate that, in the utterance of them, it could be said, that it was not the disciples who spake, but the Spirit Himself, as the Spirit of their Father, who spake in them. It is true that these defences were the most appropriate that could have been framed for the occasions on which they were called forth. As the disciples were arraigned on the charge of disturbing the peace

by the preaching of Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah, it was not only fit, but necessary, that they should justify themselves by vindicating His Messianic claims. This fact, however, but strengthens the cause of the Verbal inspirationists; for if, in instances where the material to be employed was indicated so clearly by the circumstances in which the disciples were placed, our Lord regarded it necessary to bestow upon them the gift of the Holy Ghost to supply both the matter and the language of their addresses, surely it is not reasonable to hold that in furnishing the Church with the treasury of saving truth contained in the Gospels, Epistles, and other New Testament writings, a less measure of the Divine agency was needed or vouchsafed. If they needed a *mouth*, as well as *wisdom*, on those occasions where the course to be followed was made patent by the providence of God, on what ground can it be alleged that the latter alone, and not the former, was needed in laying the foundations of the Church of Christ, and in providing her with an infallible rule of faith and practice, interspersed with historical incidents, which should serve as illustrations of its import and application, under all the varying circumstances of her future development in all lands, and through all time? Beyond all question, a Plenary Verbal Inspiration, supplying the disciples of our Lord with *such* defences, carries with it and compels the conclusion of a like full, unlimited, and

efficient inspiration of the Apostles and Evangelists in communicating to the Church the unutterably glorious revelation of the New Testament.

This brief review of the actual defences conducted under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, vouchsafed in the promise in question, is sufficient to show, that Prebendary Row has made a grave mistake in omitting it from his inductive inventory. By the exclusion of this one text, as is now manifest, he has shut out from the discussion a large portion of the history of the Acts of the Apostles, the design of which, to a very large extent, is to recount the acts of the men to whom, under the agency of the inspiring Spirit, was committed the inauguration of the Gospel Dispensation. An induction involving the omission of such passages is as censurable as it is unscientific, and the argument based upon it is chargeable with all the vice and fallacy of a narrow, and an utterly inadequate, induction of the facts upon which the determination of the question at issue depends.

But the inadequacy of our author's induction cannot be fully estimated until it is seen that he makes it the basis of his views in regard "to the nature or extent of the Divine assistance afforded to the human authors of the Bible." Alleging that these promises "constitute the whole of our Lord's promises on the subject," he affirms that "it is evident that they are inadequate to form the basis of a general

theory as to the nature or extent of the Divine assistance afforded to the human authors of the Bible," and adds, that "all we can affirm is that it was adequate to qualify His disciples for the work which He directed them to perform, but it is impossible to erect upon them a general theory of Inspiration, or to determine how far an element of human imperfection would be permitted to enter into its record" (p. 456).

This is certainly a singular procedure on the part of our author, who charges the advocates of the Verbal theory with an abandonment of the inductive method. He proposes to ascertain the Scripture doctrine of the inspiration of the New Testament writers by an induction of our Lord's promises. In doing so, he leaves out of his induction some of Christ's promises which ought to be regarded as among the chief testimonies on the subject under discussion, the omission of which involves the omission of passages which furnish unequivocal proof of an absolutely Plenary Verbal Inspiration, and, having reduced his induction to a minimum, he proceeds to draw his conclusion, not simply in regard to the inspiration of the men to whom these promises were made, but enlarges the scope of his inference into a generalisation embracing the whole Bible! Thus from premises altogether inadequate to justify his conclusion regarding the inspiration of the writers of the New Testament, he deduces his doctrine re-

specting the inspiration of the writers of both the Old Testament and the New!

Nor does one's surprise at this extension of the sweep of his conclusion beyond his first intention, and beyond all warrant furnished by his limited induction, suffer abatement, but rather the reverse, when it is found, on the very next page, that he represents the Scriptures of the Old Testament as entitled to rank higher on the scale of inspiration than those of the New. "It is also worthy of remark," he says, "that any equivalent to the formula, 'Thus saith the Lord,' with which the prophets of the Old Testament introduce their utterances, is only found on one or two occasions in the pages of the New" (p. 457). Surely if the Scriptures of the Old Testament are to be thus differentiated from those of the New in regard to the degree of their inspiration, and if the formula, "Thus saith the Lord," be the index to the degree of the differentiation, it cannot be scientific to classify them both under the one category and determine that category by New Testament testimonies, which, save in one or two instances, fall short of this formula. On the question thus raised respecting the respective claims of the two Testaments, enough has been said already to show that, in the estimate of the New Testament writers themselves, their writings stood upon a footing of perfect equality with those of the Old. Such was their estimate, and if we are to judge by her treatment

of these writings, such has been the estimate of the Christian Church in Apostolic times and ever since. The people of God have ever regarded the New Testament Scriptures as part and parcel of the one Spirit-inspired record, and looked upon them, not only as entitled to all the reverence due to the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, but as furnishing a Divinely authoritative key to unlock their mysteries. The only effect of such invidious comparisons as our author has instituted, if well founded, would be to shake all confidence in the Scriptures of both Testaments.

Touching the assertion (p. 457) that "any equivalent to the formula, 'Thus saith the Lord,' with which the Prophets of the Old Testament introduce their utterances, is only to be found on one or two occasions in the pages of the New," there need be no hesitation in making the counter-assertion, that language equivalent to this "formula" is of frequent occurrence, whilst language implying all that it claims gives character to the New Testament record. Let the following instances suffice as specimens: "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts ii. 4). Peter's reference in this chapter to the prophecy of Joel will serve as a sufficient rebuke to our author's attempt to place the Old Testament above the New. Joel's prophecy, as interpreted by Peter, reverses

completely our author's estimate, and places the New Dispensation above the Old in regard to the *copiousness* of the effusion of the Spirit and the *numerical extension* of the gift of prophecy among the servants and handmaidens of the Lord. As instituting a like comparison, the following may be adduced: "If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?" (2 Cor. iii. 7, 8).

Such language to such a church, possessing the spiritual gifts described in his first epistle (chap. xii.), or to any church in Paul's day, could convey no other impression than that, in his estimation, the New Dispensation stood pre-eminently distinguished above the Old in regard to spiritual endowments. In the second chapter of his first epistle to this same church, we find one of the many New Testament equivalents to the formula, "Thus saith the Lord," on the absence of which our author places so great reliance. After speaking of the source and channel of the doctrines he preached, the Apostle says: "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing" (συγκρίνοντες, interpreting, explaining) "spiritual things with spiritual"—interpreting the things of the Spirit in or

by the words of the Spirit. Here is certainly a full equivalent to the formula in question, and one which expressly teaches the doctrine which our author rejects, for the claim advanced is, that the words employed in the communication of the mysteries revealed by the Spirit were words which were not taught by the wisdom of man, as in the schools of the rhetoricians, but by the Holy Ghost Himself. This passage, moreover, demonstrates the rashness of the author in basing an argument upon the frequency or infrequency with which such expressions as "Thus saith the Lord" occur in the New Testament. Were there no other expressions or formulæ than this to be found in the writings of the Apostle, it would of itself be quite sufficient to establish the claim of a Plenary Verbal Inspiration for all that the Apostle uttered in communicating these mysteries to the Church of God.

LECTURE X.

The Ultimate Ground of Faith in the Scriptures as the Word of God.

HAVING established, from the testimony of the Scriptures themselves, the doctrine of Plenary Verbal Inspiration, and having met such objections to that doctrine as merit notice, it only remains that the question respecting the ultimate ground of our faith in the Scriptures as the word of God be considered. The true doctrine on this vital question is very clearly and fully set forth in the Westminster Standards, as follows :—

"The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the Author thereof; and therefore it is to be received, because it is the word of God.

"We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverend esteem of the Holy Scripture, and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of

the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the word of God; yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and Divine authority thereof is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts" (chap. i. §§ IV. and V.).

1. It will be seen at once that while the Westminster divines attach importance to the testimony of the Church, and regard it as fitted to lead us to entertain for the Scriptures "an high and reverend esteem," they are careful to reject the Romish doctrine, that the Scriptures derive their authority from the Church's testimony. This assertion of the dependence of the Scriptures for their authority upon the testimony of the Church is a fundamental error of the Papacy. It reverses the relation of the Church to the word of God, making the word the creature of the Church, whereas the Church is begotten through the instrumentality of the word.

2. It is also to be observed, that while the Westminster divines regard the internal evidences presented in the Scriptures themselves as abundantly proving them to be the word of God, they, nevertheless, ascribe "our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and Divine authority thereof"

to "the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts."

This is a well-balanced, scholarly, judicial, and eminently Scriptural exhibition of the evidences whereon Protestants base the claims of the writings of the Old and New Testament to be regarded and treated as the very word of God. It excludes no legitimate class of evidence, it embraces all the sources of information, whether internal or external, it attaches all due weight to each, and it reserves for the Holy Spirit that prerogative of effectual witness-bearing without which no man can see, or enter, the kingdom of God.

This latter element is vital to the discussion of the doctrine of Inspiration, as it is also a fundamental doctrine of the economy of redemption. It may serve to bring out the truth and importance of this doctrine all the more fully and distinctly, as well as to indicate its proper position in the chain of evidence, if we consider the objections advanced by Dr. Lee to the foregoing statement of it by the Westminster divines. "The fundamental defect," Dr. Lee remarks, "of this mode of upholding inspiration, appears to consist, not in the conception itself, but in the place assigned to it in the chain of Christian evidences, when employed to prove and not to confirm—when addressed to the judgment of the understanding, not to the affections of the heart. If offered as the sole *or even leading proof*,

we scarcely feel surprise at its rejection by the sceptic or the unbeliever. To the intellect of such persons the alleging such a fact as *proof* must be absolutely unintelligible. As well might any of us discourse with the blind upon the varieties of colour, or a being of some higher order offer to our minds a new idea for the reception of which the proper sense was wanting. The Bible must be recognised as Divine before such a witness can be called in confirmation of previous evidence. But to the Christian, who, with willing mind and humble acquiescence, accepts the Scriptures as the word of God, this testimony of the Holy Spirit is a precious treasure. . . . The Spirit who breathes the principle of Christian life into the being of man produces, as we read the words of the sacred writers, this recognition of His own former agency; and unconsciously, like the statue of ancient story, the soul makes symphony when the ray touches it from above" ("Lee on Inspiration," Lect. I. p. 33).

It will be observed that Dr. Lee does not object to the doctrine of the testimony of the Spirit by which, as we read the words of the sacred writers, He intimates His recognition of His own former work and attests it to our hearts. In regard to this most important truth he holds the very same doctrine as is taught in the passages which he cites for criticism from the Confession of Faith. The only point on which he differs from the Westminster

divines is in regard to the place assigned to this species of evidence in establishing the Divine inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures. According to Dr. Lee, "the Bible must be recognised as Divine, and the man become a Christian, before such a witness can be called in confirmation of previous evidence"; according to the Westminster divines, the *previous evidence*, although sufficient to prove the Bible to be the word of God, does not ingenerate full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and Divine authority thereof. This persuasion and assurance arise, they hold, from "the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the truth in our hearts."

A passage from Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity" (book iii. chap. 8), which Dr. Lee quotes, as a motto, on the flyleaf of his second lecture, expresses accurately his idea, viz., "Scripture teacheth us that saving truth which God hath discovered unto the world by Revelation, and it presumeth us taught otherwise that itself is Divine and sacred." In another part of the same book, Hooker's doctrine on this point is given with greater fulness, as follows: "Albeit SS. do profess to contain in it all things which are necessary unto salvation, yet the meaning cannot be simply of all things which are necessary, but all things which are necessary in some certain kind or form; as all things that are necessary and either could not at all or could not

easily be known by the light of natural discourse; all things which are necessary to be known that we may be saved; but known with presupposal of knowledge concerning certain principles, whereof it receiveth us already persuaded, and then instructeth us in all the residue that are necessary. In the number of these principles, one is the sacred authority of Scripture. Being therefore persuaded by other means, that the Scriptures are the oracles of God, themselves do then teach us the rest and lay before us all the duty God requireth at our hands as necessary to salvation."

The question here raised, it will be seen, is a very important one. It is, in fact, one of the principal questions between Protestants and Romanists. It is thus stated by Turretine ("DE SCRIPTURA," quæst. vi. th. 9): "Cur, seu propter quid, credamus Scripturam esse verbum Dei, seu quo argumento præcipue utatur Spiritus Sanctus ad persuadendam nobis Scripturæ Divinitatem. An testimonio seu voce ecclesiæ: An vero notis et criteriis ipsi Scripturæ insitis?" The question is reduced to this: Does the Bible contain within itself proofs of its Divine origin, or must we be taught otherwise, as Hooker and Dr. Lee allege, that itself is Divine and sacred? The expression "*otherwise*" here employed by Hooker, and by his quotation of it endorsed by Dr. Lee, shows very clearly that the evidence to which they refer is external to the

Scripture itself, and, therefore, warrants the conclusion, that the doctrine inculcated by both is, that it is by external testimony that men are brought to believe that the Scriptures are the word of God, and that through this species of testimony a man is led to accept the Bible as the word of God with the faith of a Christian.

The only argument advanced in support of this position by Dr. Lee is an objection founded upon an alleged analogy between the case of a blind man listening to a discourse on colours and that of a sceptic or an unbeliever listening to an argument in support of inspiration from the testimony of the Holy Ghost. On this objection it may be remarked: 1. That it is undoubtedly true that sceptics and unbelievers are as incompetent to discern spiritual things as blind men are to discern distinctions of colour. The natural man, that is the man in his natural estate, unregenerated by the Holy Spirit, can neither receive nor know the things of the Spirit of God (1 Cor. ii. 14). "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii. 3). On this point there is no room for dispute where the authority of the Sacred Scriptures is recognised. 2. This clearly revealed truth, a truth accepted by Dr. Lee, and which he holds equally with the Westminster divines, does not warrant the inference, that there is no use in discoursing to men in their natural estate about the

things of the Spirit. The analogy on which this writer relies does not hold further than the fact of the incapacity. In this particular, physical blindness and spiritual blindness agree, but here the analogy ends. All men hold themselves responsible for their blindness and hardness of heart in regard to the things of the Spirit; no blind man holds himself, nor do others hold him, responsible in regard to the apprehension of objects which can be cognised only by means of the organs of vision. 3. The Scriptures do not recognise the legitimacy of the inference which our author draws from the incapacity of the sceptic and the unbeliever. While proclaiming and emphasising the sinner's incapacity, they, nevertheless, proclaim to him the very truths which they represent as beyond his powers of apprehension, and affirm his responsibility in relation to them.

It is, indeed, hard to imagine two positions more thoroughly antagonistic than the one taken by Dr Lee and that taken by the word of God in regard to the place to be assigned to this species of proof in the chain of the Christian evidences. He argues, from the natural blindness of men in regard to the things of the Spirit, the folly of addressing to them this species of proof, while the Scriptures find in this estate of blindness to the things of the Spirit the necessity of the Spirit's testimony. So prominently is this doctrine presented in Scripture that it is one of the leading

truths of the economy of redemption. The Spirit is promised in connection with the whole work of conviction, conversion, regeneration, and sanctification. It is by His agency men are born again, and it is by His agency the redeemed shall be raised from the dead and clothed with immortal bodies bearing the image of Christ's glorified humanity. The Scriptures do not introduce the agency of the Spirit after the sinner has discovered, or has been informed by some man or church, that the Bible is the word of God, leaving it to Him to confirm the faith thus ingenerated. On the contrary, they represent Him as the Agent by whom men hitherto dead in trespasses and sins are quickened into spiritual life and brought to see and enter the kingdom of God.

If our author simply meant to take the ground taken by Dr. Chalmers in his prelections on Butler's "Analogy," there could be no objection to his teaching. If he meant to say that in dealing with sceptics and unbelievers generally, there is a legitimate field for arguments which may reconcile such men to a patient hearing of the Christian evidences; or if, further, the position were that one may legitimately array before unbelievers the external evidences of the Divine origin of the Scriptures in order to prepare them for the examination of the internal evidences, there would be no need to challenge the doctrine or to enter a defence. But when the ground is taken, with Hooker, that the Scripture

presumeth us to be taught otherwise that itself is Divine and sacred, and that the sinner, through this teaching or in some other way not indicated by the author, becomes a Christian, accepting with willing mind and humble acquiescence the Scriptures as the word of God, it must be manifest that the position is in direct antagonism with some of the most important doctrines of Revelation touching the estate into which the Fall brought mankind and the agency whereby the Gospel of Christ effects their deliverance. The position taken is that a man can become a Christian the eyes of whose understanding have never been enlightened by the Spirit to apprehend the saving truths of the Divine word. How, or in what respects, such a Christian differs from the natural man whose inability is so clearly taught in Scripture, would certainly be difficult to define. There is no middle ground, nor half-way covenant, between that occupied by the natural man described by the Apostle (1 Cor. ii. 14) and that occupied by the spiritual; nor is there any efficient mode of translating the natural man into the estate of the spiritual, except by the renewal of the Holy Ghost, who acts, in the case of adults, in connection with, and correlatively to, the truths of God's word.

4. This relation of the Spirit's agency to the word of God necessarily excludes the doctrine of Hooker, reaffirmed by Dr. Lee. If the work of the Spirit in the conversion of men has reference,

not to any outside testimony, by whomsoever borne, but to the word itself, it must follow that the Scripture does not presume that we have been "otherwise taught that itself is Divine and sacred," or that we have been made Christians prior to the testimony of the Spirit "bearing witness by and with the truth in our hearts." It is not the testimony of the Church regarding the authenticity and genuineness of the word, but the word itself, that is represented as the sword of the Spirit.

5. The Scriptures teach that this instrument of the Spirit is adequate to the task. They represent it as quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and affirm that it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. iv. 12). They tell us that the law of God is perfect, and so perfect that it "converts the soul; that the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; that the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; that the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes" (Psalm xix. 7, 8).

6. The obstacles which lie in the way of the reception of the word by men are such as cannot be removed by any other instrumentality or agency. These are the darkness of the understandings and the hardness of the hearts of men. Such obstacles cannot be removed save by the agency of the Spirit.

To ascribe such achievement to anything outside the Divine record witnessed to by the Holy Spirit in the heart, is to give the glory of salvation to man and not to God.

7. Hence it is a historical fact that external testimony, even when that external testimony consisted of miracles, failed to produce faith. The history of the miracles of the Old Testament and the New, warrants this conclusion, and it is confirmed by Christ Himself, who claimed for Moses and the Prophets an evidencing power above that of the resurrection of the dead (Luke xvi. 31).

8. It is, of course, confirmatory of all this, that men are found to pass from a state of scepticism and unbelief without any external testimony or any argument on the subject of the Christian evidences. It has often occurred that men who did not believe the Bible to be the word of God have been convinced of the validity of its claims under sermons which never touched the question of the evidences.

9. It is a significant fact, and one which should be regarded as conclusive in this discussion, that the Scriptures demand the immediate acceptance of their teaching from all who read them or hear them read. (See "The Way of Life," by Dr. Charles Hodge.) The ground on which they base this demand is never anything outside the Bible itself, such as the official status or ecclesiastical authority of the person who advances it on their behalf.

10. The reasonableness of this demand lies in the self-evidencing character of the revelation itself. The case is precisely analogous to that presented in the revelation of the being and attributes of God made through the medium of His works. Men are held responsible for not discovering the invisible things of Him from the things which are made, even His eternal power and Godhood, irrespective of all collateral testimony or argument; and, in like manner, they are held responsible for beholding in Christ the brightness of the Divine glory and the express image of the invisible God, though no confirmatory testimony had ever been heard of. The justice of the Divine procedure in holding men responsible in the latter case is manifest, as in the person and work of Christ there is given the highest and clearest manifestation of God. He that has seen Christ has seen the Father; and if, on seeing Christ, he has not seen the Father, the reason is not to be found in any deficiency in the manifestation, but is to be sought in the moral aversion and spiritual blindness of the man himself. There is not an argument wherewith the atheist may be confounded and condemned which does not gather tenfold force to the confusion and condemnation of him who shuts his eyes and hardens his heart against the higher revelation of God made in the person and work of His beloved Son.

CONCLUSION.

IN substance and in form, then, the Bible is Divine. The Spirit of God has determined its matter and fashioned its mould. It is true it contains historical statements recounting incidents enacted before the eyes of the narrators, or which came to their knowledge through the ordinary channels of information, and references to the phenomena of the heavens and the earth which are not such as to require supernatural Revelation, but which are within the compass of human competency. These facts, however, do not invalidate the doctrine advocated in this book. Verbal inspirationists do not hold, nor is it involved in the position they undertake to defend, that the sacred writers placed on record nothing save what they received by Revelation. What they contend for, and insist on, is, that the inspired writers committed nothing to writing for the record of which they had not the authority of the inspiring Spirit. This they hold to be vital to the claims of the Scriptures to be regarded as the word of God. The men whom the Holy Spirit brought into being, and trained, and

endowed, for the execution of the momentous task of furnishing, for all time, the Rule of Faith and Practice, with its precepts, and principles, and sanctions, and historical illustrations, were not left by Him at liberty to make choice of such materials as they might think fit to employ. Whether the material was of supernatural or of providential revelation, the writer was under the instruction, and subject to the will, of the Holy Spirit, in making use of it, and was so guided, and moved, and controlled, that he embodied in the sacred record nothing for which he had not the Divine authorisation. The incidents recorded embrace some of the most flagrant violations of the law of truth, and purity, and righteousness, which have occurred in the history of our fallen race ; but the record embracing them is, nevertheless, Divine, as the writer was authorised by the Holy Spirit to give them a place in the sacred narrative. These Heaven-attested facts are important elements in the record, as they serve to illustrate the verity of man's fall and the depth of his depravity, and, at the same time, give emphasis to the revelation of the sovereign grace of Him who sent His only begotten Son into such a world, not to condemn, but to save. As the two themes of the Bible are the Ruin and the Recovery of men, it was not only befitting, but necessary, that the history of redemption should depict and illustrate the Ruin, as well as describe and glorify, by signal instances, the for-

bearance, and longsuffering, and abounding mercy of our God. The historical facts illustrate the doctrines of Sin and Grace, and are indispensable in a narrative which claims to be a history of the Ruin wrought by the one and of the Deliverance wrought by the other.

And what is true of the matter and substance of the Revelation is equally true of the mould and form employed in the communication of it. Careful of the substance, the Spirit was careful also of the form. Having prepared His agents and gifted them with those personal characteristics which were necessary to give to the record the variety required by the laws of testimony, He took possession of their entire powers, thus conferred, and used them in accordance with the laws of their respective mental constitutions. Of the mode in which the Divine Spirit operated upon the minds of the agents honoured by Him with such high commission, no one presumes to speak; nor do verbal inspirationists base their conclusions upon any *à priori* assumptions. The ground taken by all intelligent advocates of the doctrine is, that the Scriptures alone are the only reliable source of information on this subject, and that their teaching in regard to it is to be ascertained in the same way as their teaching in regard to the doctrines of Regeneration, Justification, Sanctification, or any other doctrine within the compass of the analogy of the faith.

Proceeding on these principles, which are the only legitimate principles for our guidance in this inquiry, the only possible conclusion is, that the Bible is what it claims to be—the Word of God—a Divinely determined record, whose contents have been selected by the Holy Ghost, and recorded, "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." Such is the only doctrine of Inspiration which can bear philosophic scrutiny, or appeal, with any hope of success, for support to the Bible itself, as it is the only doctrine in harmony with the Spirit's agency within the sphere of an applied redemption.

In advocating this high estimate of the word of God which abideth for ever, one cannot but feel that he is in sympathy with Him whose name is the Word of God, whose testimony respecting it (Matt. v. 18) is, that "till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." In this verdict Prophets (Isa. xl. 6-8) and Apostles (1 Peter i. 24, 25) unite, setting the incorruptibility and immortality of the word in contrast with the evanescence of earthly things and the short-lived glory of man. "All flesh is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever."

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